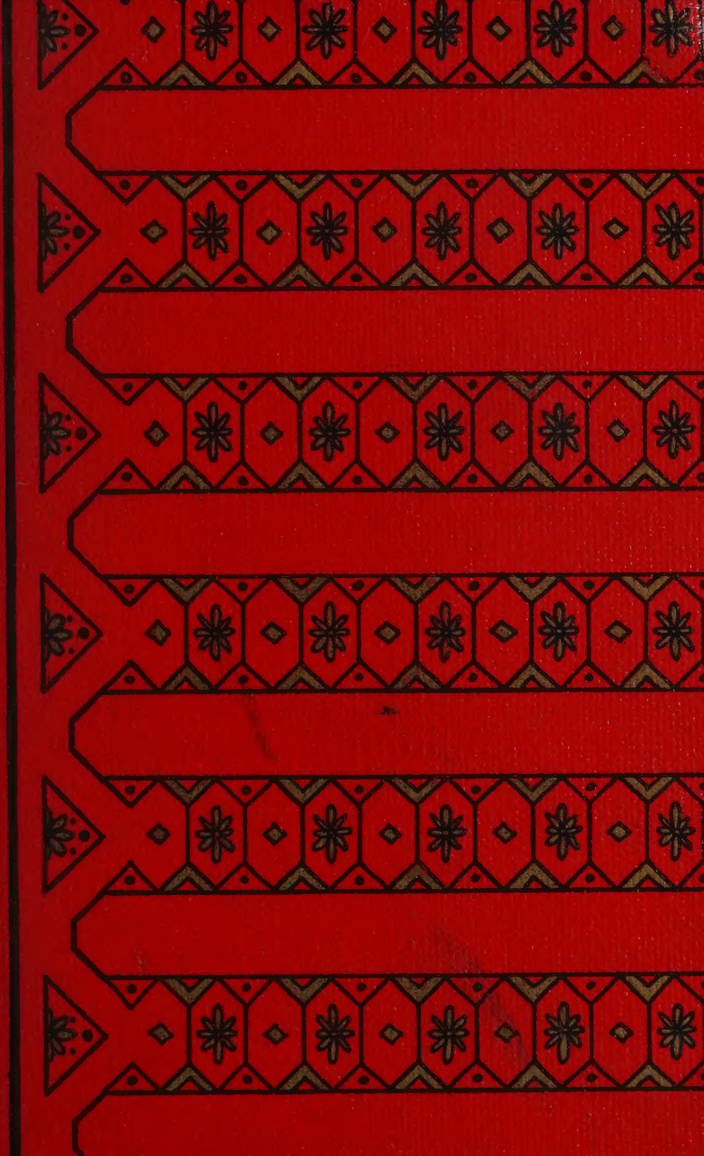

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AUCTION BRIDGE FOR ALL

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PART ONE
THE BIDDING

For when the One Great Scorer comes
To write against your name—He'll write
Not that you won or lost,
But how you played the game.

CHAPTER I

How to Become a Good Player

We cannot all become first-class players, but everyone who is keen on Bridge can make himself a good player if he cares to take sufficient pains. The only people who are hopeless are those who are so self-complacent and conceited that they fondly imagine they know everything about Auction Bridge, and those who are too lazy to try to learn more.

The latter we can leave to stew in their own juice, hoping we may more often get them as opponents than as partners.

But to the former I would say, no matter how well you play, do not imagine you have come to the end. Auction Bridge is such a wonderful game that there is no finality about it. The finest player on earth has something left to learn. And it is the mark of your real progress if, after long years of play, you become more and more humble because you realise the wonderful possibilities of Bridge.

First, then, you must be convinced that you have something to learn. It is the want of appreciation of this truth that accounts for such a general prevalence of bad play. People fancy they can become good players by mere practice, which is a great mistake. They only move on in one eternal blundering round. I know players who go on year after year and never improve. On the contrary, some of them get worse. The reason is they cannot, or will not, take the trouble to have lessons, read books or articles upon the game. They never get down to bedrock, or realise the fundamental principles of Auction Bridge as distinct from Bumble Puppy. They follow suit correctly, make their Aces and Kings, and think that there is nothing more in it. They are like people who imagine that they know all about modern scientific astronomy by watching for a few weeks the apparent motion of the planets.

Auction Bridge is worth a little trouble and study. The better you play the more you will enjoy the game. If you find yourself a perpetual loser, you don't get much fun out of it. And, although it is quite possible that you might find yourself a loser over a long period, through bad cards and bad partners, if you continue to lose over an extended period, it is a sure sign that there is something wrong with your play or calling.

The best methods of improving your game are :

(1) *Play whenever possible with better players than yourself, and keep your eyes open.*

(2) *Watch good players.* This is a cheaper method than No. 1, and still more effective. Study their calling and play. It is quite a fascinating pastime, and you can pick up a deal of useful information.

(3) *Solve problems.* In many of the periodicals problems appear which throw valuable light on bidding and on play. A study of these will rectify faults and mistakes in bidding and play.

(4) *Practice at home.* You can do this even by yourself. Deal out cards and look at each hand in turn, and decide what you would call if you had not seen the other cards. Then play them, not as dummy hands, but as you would in actual play.

Deal four complete hands. Look at your own first, leaving the others face downwards. Decide what you would bid. Then look at the hand opposite you, which would be your partner's, and make up your mind what he ought to do. Then examine the other hands and work out what they should call.

Having arranged the correct call, play out the hands, not as if they were double dummy, but as if you had not seen your opponents' cards.

This exercise is particularly useful for those who are addicted to over-calling, and practice with it will often correct distorted vision.

Make a note of peculiar hands and freak hands.

Deal four hands and expose two, and work out on paper either of the unseen hands, after you have assumed a probable call. You can score 5 for placing correct number of

each suit in the hand, 2 if only one wrong, and 1 for each honour placed.

This is an excellent exercise in placing unseen cards.

Deal yourself a No-Trump hand over the average—with, say, three Aces, a King, two Queens, and a Jack. Then deal out the other three hands at random, and see how it works out in play. If things come out too favourably and you find your partner with all the good cards, transpose the hands.

You can easily construct for yourself a number of exercises on similar lines—playing a trump suit, supporting partner's bid, " taking out " your partner, and so on.

Half an hour a day well spent on card exercises often does a beginner more good than hours of actual play.

(5) *Cultivate your card memory. Do card calisthenics.* Deal out four or six cards to each hand, look at them and memorise them. Then turn them face downwards and see if you remember them accurately. If you do not, try with three cards. After a little practice extend the operation with more and more cards. After, say, half an hour a day, in three or four weeks' time you will find that, without any superhuman effort on your part, your card memory has improved miraculously. Within a limited period, varying according to your quickness and natural memory, you will be able to remember the distribution of the whole pack. You may think this a rather boring exercise, but, as a matter of fact, it is quite amusing and an excellent indoor pastime. You can take your friends on at it, and you have no idea how it will improve your game.

(6) *Study the human element.* The successful Auction Bridge player must be something of a psychologist. He must play men as well as cards. The acute observer who is quick to note the follies, foibles, idiosyncrasies, and weaknesses of his partners and opponents has an immense advantage over the player who is guided merely by rule of thumb. I know certain old-fashioned players who object very strongly to this idea.

" I play the game, sir," they say, " exactly the same under all circumstances."

Praiseworthy and noble sentiment, no doubt, but an immense handicap in winning.

Auction Bridge is a very different game from the original form of Bridge and Whist. The auction has introduced an entirely novel factor. Try, as experts may, to bring the bidding within the limits of mechanical formulæ, there always remains the human element. The bold and agile speculator who judges his men has the advantage over the mere theorist all the time.

(7) *Don't judge by results.* A mark of the good player is that he does not judge by results. It is very galling when you have made a perfectly legitimate call and gone down, owing to some freakish lie of the cards, to see your partner shake his head and remark, " A bit rash, wasn't it ? "—or something of the kind. A good player will always distinguish between the reckless and silly call and a justifiable risk. His comment, if he makes one at all, will be " Bad luck. Your bid was absolutely sound, but you found the cards massed against you in one hand."

Again and again have I heard good calls execrated because they did not happen to come off, and *vice versa.* I have heard shockingly bad bids applauded because, through a fluke, they have proved successful. *It takes a good player to appreciate a good player.*

Just as at billiards, or at golf, or any other game you like to mention, the expert can tell in a few minutes whether the player knows what he is about, so at Bridge the good player is soon recognised by a kindred spirit He may win or lose. His bids may come off or fail. But that does not make the least bit of difference. It is not by his success or failure that he will be judged, but by his methods of calling and play.

(8) *Don't be in a hurry : don't " press."* The good player is never in a hurry. By that I do not mean that he is a slow player. Far from it. But he has not that feverish, hectic quality, which we all know, of playing every rubber as if it were his last. He is content to go slowly and let time tell. He does not rush at it or snatch at it. He waits and bides his opportunity. *But he never misses a chance.*

These are a few of the " human " attributes. They are really more difficult to acquire than any amount of Bridge lore. What is called " card sense," or intuition, may, of

course, be a natural gift. But it can be gained by practice just as card memory can be acquired. Cleverness alone, in-born or learnt, does not make the good Bridge-player. When you come down to rock bottom it is character that tells all the time.

(9) *Get a good reputation. Be reliable.* To have a good Bridge reputation is an invaluable asset, and it is worth while taking pains to secure it. It makes all the difference between winning and losing rubbers.

It is astonishing how quickly a club player acquires a reputation which either makes or mars him. He is soon summed up as "sound" or "unreliable," "erratic," "dangerous," "nervy," "panicky," or "hopeless."

Everybody who takes the trouble can win a reputation as a *reliable* player and partner. And this quality is more to be coveted than brilliance.

The dashing, fireworky person, who now and then does wonderful things, is often a sore trial and source of perplexity to his partner.

Be *reliable*. It is not always easy. It involves a good deal of self-restraint, self-denial, and grit. It means standing by and strictly adhering to principles.

By this I do not mean that there can be no elasticity with a reliable player's game. But it rules out all the wild and fantastic calls that so often prolong rubbers and result in heavy penalties.

The true punishment of the bad caller is not merely the points that he loses for himself and his partner, but the damage he does to his own reputation.

There are certain players whose bid it is never safe to support. You know if you raise them once they will never stop bidding. The consequence is that you take refuge in silence and refuse to support their calls—not out of pique, but as the lesser of two evils.

The backward caller who never opens his mouth unless he has a cast-iron hand is nearly as bad. It is necessary to adopt different methods with him. As he says "No bid" equally on a good or bad hand, you never know where you are with him.

The reliable partner is the happy mean between these

two types. He calls up, but he does not call recklessly. He will not let you down by a ridiculous bid. He may not have a vast amount of imagination, but he has common sense and judgment. He does not allow himself to be rattled, and he is a great stand-by in a tight corner.

Everyone makes mistakes at Bridge, but there are certain kinds of mistakes which the reliable player never makes. He may revoke inadvertently, or through thinking a trick ahead—and if you, as his partner, allow him to do so you are as much to blame as he is—but he does not forget how many trumps are out, or take an unnecessary finesse, or play out of the wrong hand.

If you have a good Bridge reputation, cherish it. Don't play tricks with it. We all have inclinations to do foolish things at times at cards.

In fact, I think it is rather pleasant to do foolish things now and then. But I quite realise that to preserve your Bridge reputation you must studiously resist temptation.

The Human Element

Very few writers have dealt with the psychology of the game. In fact, the only author who has written about it at all comprehensively is Brigadier-General Sykes, whose book, *The Bridge Mind*, contains much subtle and suggestive matter.

A Bridge-player needs a great number of faculties, and needs them in *proper proportion*. Take concentration. That is an essential quality. But concentration alone is ineffective if it is not backed by *resilience of mind*, which enables the player to adapt his game to varying conditions. You must guard against rigidity of mind. Auction Bridge is not a hard and fast, inflexible game that can be "learnt" once and for all. It is constantly changing, and that is what makes it so attractive. New ideas, new theories, new conventions should not be dismissed just because they are "new." They should be studied and examined. The good player is for ever learning.

What is Card Instinct? It is a combination of qualities. Imagination, Insight or Intuition—which is immediate

insight—and Reason (the power of deduction) play their parts. No player can be really good without imagination.

He must form the habit of making mental pictures of the cards held by his partner or opponents.

"Insight," writes General Sykes, "is penetration of events or character, and it is with character that Bridge-players are greatly concerned. He who can read a character can often read a hand."

Reason works by synthesis or analysis. At Bridge the analytic or deductive method is of more use than the synthetic, the power of deduction having more to do in the game than imagination. From the bidding and from the play of every card the good player makes his inferences and deductions until, half-way through the hand, he can often "place" with absolute accuracy the remainder of the cards.

Then there is judgment, which General Sykes tells us may be likened to the general of an army, whose staff comprises the imagination, the insight, the reason, the memory, and other faculties. The judgment learns to know by practice when it can trust the quicker faculties. A judgment may be quick, but it must have been through the process of *discrimination*, which is the power of seeing differences, if it is to be wise. "A good player is superior to the ordinary player in that he thinks ahead, and is not actuated at once by his senses."

Card memory can be cultivated and developed to a wonderful degree.

"The accomplished player recognises an important card the moment it appears, and he treasures it away, but he does not weary the machinery of his memory with cards which he foresees will have no serious bearing on the game."

Auction Bridge is a great character revealer.

Most players, to the student of character, give themselves away at Bridge. Not intentionally, of course, nor consciously. The player with a bad hand often proclaims the fact by the tone of his voice or the rapidity with which he makes his bids. And you can frequently tell when a player has "got the goods" by the triumphant note in his tones. Of course, this should not be, but unfortunately

it is. And, human nature being what it is, I don't suppose it will ever be remedied.

The ideal to aim at (and how few players reach it !) is absolute impassivity. That is to say, you ought to try not to reveal your emotions either by word or gesture or expression of face. You should try to take the same time in making your bids whether your hand be good, bad, or indifferent, and you should endeavour to control the tones of your voice so that they give no indications of your thoughts.

It is told of a certain emotional player that he sank back despairingly in his chair when his partner opened with a Spade lead. When the original leader got in again he continued with the Spade, with disastrous results. At the end of the hand his partner said :

" Did you not see that the Spade did not suit me ? "

The answer was : " I saw it so plainly from your attitude that I thought it unfair to act on your indication."

And that was the right answer.

But, apart from these and other methods of unfair indication, it is wise to observe the card characteristics of those you play with.

You will soon learn to know the selfish player who wants to play the joint hands himself every time, the greedy player who over-reaches himself by avarice, the foxy player who " lies low " to bring off a double, the timid player who is afraid to call his hand to its full value, and who is easily bluffed out of a bid, and the incorrigible over-caller, who goes on heedless of penalties. You have a perfect right to take advantage of your knowledge of these matters. It would be absurd to play the same game with a reckless partner as you would with a backward one. A bid which would be perfectly right with a reasonable partner becomes dangerous when you are with a player who never knows when to stop.

Studying personalities does help, and often saves the situation when you are in a tight corner.

I admit that when you take into consideration personalities as well as cards it complicates the game, and makes of it a somewhat different proposition from that contemplated by the laws and text-books. But that cannot be

helped. Unless you turn people into automata you cannot expel the human element in Auction Bridge. It is there ; it is part of the game as much as in Poker. While you must try not to allow yourself to be influenced by mannerisms and deportment, you are perfectly entitled to take into consideration card-character.

You cannot, if you expect to win, play exactly the same game under all conditions. With a weak partner you must make your calls and play as simple as possible.

Your true psychologist is an opportunist. He knows when to break rules and take chances. You may play many rubbers without an opportunity of applying psychology. Of course, it does not follow that the psychologist is always right. He may misjudge his moment or his men, and he may get badly bitten. But when he is correct he brings off a brilliant coup which astonishes and often aggravates other people.

Auction Bridge psychology is not merely a matter of bluff. It involves a study of the workings of the minds of partners and opponents alike. And this is part of the charm of the game. The tilting of one wit against another during bidding, the interplay of two imaginations, or the struggle of one insight with another are sheer delight. A player who has by deduction " placed " the cards correctly experiences keen enjoyment.

That is why Auction Bridge, with its innumerable combinations and chances of using all one's faculties, is the greatest of all card games so far invented.

Twenty Golden Rules

A good Bridge-player has himself under discipline. He has been so well drilled that when the time comes for action he does the right thing almost mechanically. In drawing up the following Twenty Golden Rules, framed as a result of observation, I offer them to players as the basis for a system of Bridge drill.

(1) Take the same time over bidding whether your hand is good or bad.

(2) Stick to a sound and simple system of bidding, and

don't keep on varying it. Your partners will never know where they are if you do. Remember always *Auction Bridge is a partnership game.*

(3) Keep your eyes on the table and not on your cards. After the play has commenced you should know your hand, and ought only to require to look at your cards to see that you are pulling out the right one. Only by keeping your eyes on the table can you follow the game intelligently and draw inferences from the fall of the cards.

(4) Draw your inferences as each card is led, and place and remember the cards. Say to yourself, " Z has two more trumps," and so on.

(5) If you make a non-free double you should be in a position to defeat the contract without assistance from your partner. Observance of this rule will save much heated recrimination.

(6) Never double on one suit alone. Never double the only bid you can defeat.

(7) Don't give up a game certainty, especially in rubber game, for a shadowy double.

(8) Don't take your partner out of a double unless you have a really good suit of your own. The " rescue " is often fatal.

(9) Learn the conventional leads by heart. Don't think because the cards are of the same value it doesn't matter which you lead. Lead the highest of a sequence not headed by the Ace. Lead the highest of your partner's suit when you have three or less. Don't lead a singleton if you have four trumps. Avoid leading from a doubleton.

(10) *Lead through strength and up to weakness.* If you are sitting on Dummy's right, you lead through Dummy's strength. If on Dummy's left you lead up to Dummy's weakness. When there is a " hole " in Dummy's suit lead through it. Your partner may be able to fill the hole.

(11) When forced to lead up to strength, choose always sequence strength rather than broken strength. For instance, it is better to lead up to an Ace-King than to an A, Q or A, J, 10.

(12) When you want high cards to fall lead high cards. Thus if, holding K, Q, J, you want to get out the Ace

against you, lead your King and not your Jack. Conversely, if you want two rounds of trumps, lead the Queen, from K, Q, J. The first opponent may have the Ace and pass it.

(13) Don't deceive your partner. You can play false cards when you are Declarer, but, in opposition, never play a false card unless it cannot possibly injure your partner.

(14) Postpone a finesse as long as possible. Never take a finesse on the first round that could be taken on the second. If you hold four or five to A, Q in your own hand, and three to Jack in Dummy, do not lead Jack unless you or Dummy also hold the 10. *Lead a little one.*

(15) Never finesse when you see the game without it, nor when, if the finesse goes wrong, you may fail to make game.

(16) Don't be in a hurry as Declarer to take a ruff in the strong hand. There is always time to do that after the adverse trumps have been drawn. In opposition avoid giving the weak hand ruffs and the strong hand discards. Don't establish ruffs for the weak hand.

(17) "*King ever, Queen never.*" If the King and one are in Dummy and are led through you, put up the King. But if the Queen to two be led through, play small.

(18) Against a No Trumper keep your card of re-entry as long as possible. Retain the master-card of Declarer's suit, but part with that of your partner.

(19) If your partner leads against a No Trumper and you hold four of his suit, be careful to unblock by playing high cards on his lead.

(20) Don't get panic-stricken. Play the worst hand as calmly as the best.

Trick Valuation

Where most Bridge-players fail is in their inability to value aright the trick-making capacity of their cards. There are the optimists who constantly over-estimate them, and the pessimists who always fear the worst, and who fail to bid when they should.

The successful Bridge-player is a combination of boldness and prudence. He has in him some of the characteristics of the optimist and of the pessimist. While he is prepared to

take risks, he does so with his eyes open, and, moreover, he takes them *at the right time*. He will sit quiet at a period when the game is not in danger, where the optimist would rush in and get fined. But, when occasion demands, he will make a losing bid to keep the game alive at comparatively small cost, when the pessimist would pass. Moreover, when he sees or feels that the weight of the cards are against him, he will let the rubber go without a pang.

Numerous systems have been invented, and are still being invented, which aim at making the bidding " fool-proof." You can learn how to count up your hand with exact mathematical precision, so as to know how many tricks or half-tricks it is worth. Or you may take the Robertsonian formula, or an improvement on it, and add up the values of your high cards, so that you know definitely what you can bid and what you should not bid. But you will find that most of these systems are more useful in theory than in practice. Some are so elaborate that they are difficult to work out quickly in your head. *My advice is, Have nothing to do with them.* A simple method based on common sense and mathematical probability is all you need.

The first point to realise is the difference between a hand that is good for attacking and a hand that is good for defensive purposes. A galaxy of court cards lures many players into overvaluing their hands. But a lot of court cards in various suits, while a desirable possession, is not necessarily a good attacking hand, while it is bound to be a fine defensive one.

Let me make this clear. Suppose you hold thirteen of a suit, you are safe for thirteen tricks as long as that suit is trumps, but you are not worth a single trick if some other suit is trumps. It may seem absurd even to mention such an obvious fact, but behind it lies the principle of good bidding. We don't hold thirteen of a suit, but we sometimes hold eight or even nine of a suit. The longer the suit on which you bid, the less likely you will make a trick in it if you are playing the game in some other suit bid.

You bid, say, " Four Hearts " and your opponents " Four Spades." Your partner doubles on the strength of your Heart bid, and your opponents make their contract.

Partner says, reproachfully, "You bid four Hearts and you did not make a single trick." How often have I heard this or a similar observation!

The proper reply is: "Partner, if I had held thirteen Hearts I should not have made a single trick with Spades as trumps."

A proper realisation of this perfectly simple idea would do away with much foolish bidding and doubling. Defensive values and attacking values are quite different.

As a general rule, the trick value of a normal hand in attack is double its value in defence.

Bring it down to the barest minimum. You bid one Heart holding A, K, 9, 5, 4 of the suit, and nothing else of value. If Hearts are trumps your hand is probably worth four tricks on a normal distribution of the cards, three, three, and two. But if Hearts are not trumps your hand is worth at most two tricks in defence.

Mere length alone, then, is valuable in attack. You may sometimes have a hand containing seven, eight, or nine cards of a suit headed by Queen or Jack. What is its value? In defence nothing. In attack it can be valued according to the following:

Six trumps will win three tricks 77 times in 100.
Seven trumps will win four or more tricks 87 times in 100.
Eight trumps will win five or more tricks 93 times in 100.
Nine trumps will win seven tricks 82 times in 100.

Mark that this table applies to mere length alone when holding the lowest possible trump sequence. Headed by A, K, or A, K, Q, or K, Q, J, its value increases proportionately.

The subject is dealt with more fully in the chapter on "Mathematics that Matter."

Popular Fallacies

There are a number of strange delusions and illusions about Bridge which come to my notice from time to time, either through correspondence or personal observation. Their origin is obscure, as also is their persistence.

It is remarkable to find, even in London clubs, amongst regular players strange ideas which have no foundation in fact or which are a relic of obsolete conventions consigned to the rubbish-heap years ago.

The first prevalent fallacy—and it is very prevalent—is what is called a " Dealer's No Trumper."

When a player has made a particularly bad call he says : " Partner, I had a dealer's No Trumper."

There seems to be some queer idea that the dealer is entitled to bid " No Trumps " on " rags," or, at any rate, on very sketchy hands.

Now, there is no foundation for such an idea. On the contrary, the dealer or first caller should never bid a No Trumper unless up to standard strength. He takes upon himself the responsibility of opening the bidding. He makes the first challenge to battle, and to do so on insufficient strength is to court disaster for himself and his partner.

I suspect that this notion arose from confusion of thought. It is true that, after three passes, fourth in hand is foolish to bid " No Trumps " on a hand which would be adequate for first, second, or even third bidder. The reasons for this are obvious. But that does not mean a player is justified as dealer in bidding " No Trumps " without adequate strength.

I should like to kill the term " Dealer's No Trumper," and all that it implies.

Then there still lurks amongst a number of players the notion that a bid of a minor suit by their partner is what they call " an invitation to a No Trumper."

Again and again I have heard said : " I responded to your invitation, partner."

In modern Auction Bridge there is no such thing as an invitation to a No Trumper. The bid of a minor suit means, or should mean, the possession of at least two quick tricks by the bidder. But it does not mean necessarily that the hand is suitable for a No Trumper, nor does it invite partner to bid No Trumps on the strength of the minor suit call.

One can trace this idea to the early days of Auction Bridge, when the suits had the values of old bridge. Then there were various conventions for bidding minor suits to " invite " a No Trumper. But no such conventions exist now.

A still more tiresome fallacy is the initial bid of " Two " of a suit at love score. When a player has not a hand on which he can properly bid one of a suit or really make an initial bid at all, he will open the bidding with a call of " Two ! "

After the catastrophe that so often occurs he explains : " I called ' Two,' partner, to tell you I had not top honours."

This is a most pernicious and wrong-headed convention, which has been abandoned long ago by all good players. The idea that a player with six to the Q, J, 10, and no outside quick tricks should make an initial bid of " Two " is absolutely inconsistent with modern ideas of bidding. It is asking for trouble, and trouble nearly always ensues. When it doesn't it is because the partner has the " goods " and the initial bid was unnecessary.

I have always disliked the original bid of " Two " because it is ambiguous and misleading. But the correct use of it can sometimes be useful, especially, now, when an opening bid of " One " is made on four cards of a suit. The bid of two, correctly made, should show length—at least six of the suit—headed by K, Q, or K, Q, J. It should be made in a major suit only. In a minor suit it is useless. A bid of two Hearts or two Spades on such hands is well understood. It says : " Partner, I want to play the hand in my major suit if possible, and don't rely upon me for help if you switch. I am not likely to be useful in No Trumps."

That is the true " Two " bid. But, as I have said, I don't like it. I prefer to keep a suit of six, headed by K, Q, if I have no outside trick, for second-round bids. This applies, of course, to the score. At a critical score and in rubber game a " Two " bid may be useful and effective.

An American convention which has never been adopted widely over here is to make a bid of " Two " on a six suit headed by A, K. This, of course, has its advantages, but personally I prefer to bid " One " on this holding. But the absurd theory that a bid of " Two " can be made on six or seven to the Queen ought by this time to have been killed.

At regular intervals I receive queries about a Yarborough. Somehow or other—Heaven knows why or whence—

a fantastic belief has grown up that the holder of a Yarborough, a hand containing no card higher than a nine, can claim a fresh deal. Of course, there is no such law. The Yarborough holder must just sit and suffer. The fact that the odds against holding such a hand are 1,827 to 1 is not any comfort.

"Is it true," asks a correspondent, "that the dealer, instead of saying 'No bid,' can say, 'I reserve,' and by so doing have the right to bid if all the other players pass?" It is quite untrue. I have heard of this being done by some players in America, where new ideas are being introduced constantly, but it has no sanction in the American laws and is strongly discountenanced by authorities there.

On the Continent, at many clubs in Paris and elsewhere, they adopted a couple of years ago an innovation in the form of a bid called very appropriately "Bolshevik." I do not know whether it still survives, as I have not played in France recently. "Bolshevik" could be made by any player when it came to his turn to bid. It took precedence over any other bid.

As soon as a player declared "Bolshevik" the bidding was at an end. The bid is equivalent to *misère* at Solo Whist. The contractor plays on his own. Every man's hand is against him. His partner for the time being becomes his adversary. There is no Dummy. "Bolshevik" carries no points towards game, but the successful Declarer receives 500 points above the line from each of his opponents. If he fails he loses at the rate of 500 points per trick, or, if doubled, 1,000 points per trick to each of his opponents. Any or all of the adversaries may double in turn, but only those who have doubled receive the extra bonus.

Then there are various American diversions such as those known as Mayonnaise and Goulash. But it should be understood that players, while fully at liberty to adopt any amusing variations of the game they choose in private circles, should not imagine that they have any official sanction.

CHAPTER II

Initial Bids

Minimum Opening Major Suit Bid

Never neglect an opportunity of giving information to your partner, provided you have information worth giving.

That is the cardinal principle of modern bidding. The old idea that you must have length in a suit to make an initial bid takes a lot of killing. But it is dying gradually. The Quick Trick system is an informatory method of bidding which guarantees that the bidder can help to the extent of at least two tricks, *however the bidding goes.*

Quick tricks are Aces, and Kings guarded by Queens, cards which will win tricks on the first or second round of a suit. In the early days of Auction no one dreamt of bidding on a four-card suit. The recognised orthodox minimum was five cards headed by A, K, or A, Q. J, and even then an outside quick trick was necessary to conform with the then prevalent ideas.

Experience proved, however, that this standard was too high, and that players who made bids on less strength somehow "got there" and left the old-fashioned in the lurch.

But when the four-card suit was first introduced the barest minimum was first A, K, Q, J, or possibly A, K, Q, x. Later, largely as a result of American influence, it was realised that it paid to bid a four-card suit on even less strength, such combinations as A, K, J, 10 and A, K, J, x, being admitted, provided there was compensating strength outside.

In advocating a bid on A, K, x, x, with no other certain

tricks, England has gone one better than America. Authoritative opinion in the United States is that a four-card suit combination of less strength than A, K, Q, x or A, K, J, 10 must be supported by an outside trick or tricks to justify a "Free" or initial bid.

With their usual thoroughness American writers have grouped and classified these four-card suit combinations, and shown exactly what outside strength is necessary when using them as initial bids.

No American writer, except Mr. Sidney Lenz, advocates a bid of a *major suit* on A, K, x, x without other tricks. And yet five members of the Portland Club adjudged that Dealer at score of love all, holding A, K, x, x in hearts and three small cards in each of the other suits, should bid "One Heart."

You will notice I have italicised the words *major suit*.

My reason is that, while I am a strong advocate of the quick trick system, which postulates the possession of two quick tricks as the minimum requirement for an opening bid, I insist on the distinction between *major* and *minor* suits.

I recommend a bid of a *minor* suit on A, K, x, x; or on a hand containing two Aces provided one of the Aces is in a minor suit, and the minor suit consists of at least three cards.

This differentiation between major and minor suits is no artificial or arbitrary convention. It is obvious that when you name a minor suit you are not, as a rule, desirous of playing the hand in the suit named. You are offering your partner support, and assuring him that he will find you with at least two tricks in your hand. And that is much better than passing, which leaves him in doubt as to whether you have a sure trick at all.

But when you name a major suit the case is quite different. Here you do not offer support. You invite support. It is the duty of your partner, when you open with a major suit, to support that suit if he has normal assistance rather than change the bidding. Whereas, if you open with a minor suit bid, it is his duty to

make some higher bid, if possible, rather than support the minor.

It therefore follows that when you open with a major suit you are more likely to secure the contract than when you open with a minor. The success of a *major* suit bid on A, K, x, x must depend upon your partner holding more than average strength. In most cases, when he has a hand which will justify his support, he must be strong to make a substantive bid of his own.

It is argued that the strategic advantages of this very light bid more than outweigh the disadvantages. But personally I am still doubtful about the matter.

The advantages of the four-card suit bid are :

(1) Your bid assures your partner that you have some real strength, at least two quick tricks in attack or in defence.

(2) It gives him a safe lead if the opponents secure the declaration.

(3) If he has an average hand, or even rather less than an average hand, on which he cannot bid himself, it is unlikely to do harm and may do great good.

(4) The bid frequently enables partner to arrive at the best offensive or to play the defensive to the best possible advantage.

(5) It adds enormously to the flexibility of the bidding.

Now while I consider the holding of A, K, x, x without outside strength as insufficient, the following table shows the chief combinations of four on which I recommend an nitial bid in a major suit :

Major Suit	*Side Strength Required*
A, K, Q, J	None
A, K, Q, x	None
A, K, J, x	K, J or Q, J
A, K, x, x	A or K, Q
A, Q, J, x	A or K, Q
A, Q, 10, x	A or K, Q
A, Q, x, x	A or K, Q

Major Suit	*Side Strength Required*
A, J, 10, x	A or K, Q
K, Q, 10, x	A or K, Q
K, Q, x, x	Two outside quick tricks

A point must be remembered about these minimum bids. Once made, you have shot your bolt. The rest must be silence. Even if your partner supports once or twice you must still refuse to go on. You have had your say, and there you must finish.

As the initial bid is the foundation of the game on which the whole structure depends, it follows that *always* it must be sound and reliable. It should show always two quick tricks, no matter how the bidding goes.

An opening bid of one of a suit should not be made without top honours in the suit named, unless there is compensating side strength.

The initial suit bid without top honours is the most fruitful cause of disaster at Auction Bridge. And yet, in spite of all that has been written and said about it—for it is the one point on which all authorities agree—many players still continue the evil practice of bidding a suit on length alone.

The reason why you must not make an initial bid of a suit without " tops " is because the bid is so utterly misleading to your partner. It may be quite true that, with average assistance from him you can, if left alone, make your contract. But the point is that you have no assurance that you are going to be left alone by your opponents. It is essential for partnership and team work that an initial bid should show not merely length, or even necessarily length. But it must show quick tricks. If you have not the quick tricks in the suit you name you must, at any rate, have them outside.

If you are one of those players who bid on length without quick tricks, your partner never knows what to do with you. He will be afraid to double the adversaries when he has got a good double because you may not have a single trick

in your hand. He will be afraid to go No Trumps when he has a good No Trumper for the same reason. In fact, you put him in the cart and yourself in the cart at the same time.

Major Suit Bid Without "Tops"

Having decided what is the minimum strength for an initial major suit bid, it is not necessary to deal with hands of greater strength. It follows that a suit of five headed by A, K, or K, Q, J should always be called first in hand.

But when the suit is not headed by A, or K, Q, it is sound to call it when it has compensating side strength. The requirements are a suit of five or six and two quick tricks outside.

With a five suit headed by two honours, one quick trick and a possible outside trick are sufficient.

Thus ♠—K, 10, 9, 5, 3 ; ♥—4, 2 ; ♦—K, J, 5 ; ♣—A, 6, 4, justifies an initial bid of "One Spade."

With major suits of five headed by Q, J or Q, 10, two quick tricks Aces or King-Queens are necessary.

When the suit of five is headed by J, 10 or Jack alone it should have two quick tricks and one possible trick in addition.

Thus ♠—J, 10, 9, 6, 4 ; ♥—K, 2 ; ♦—A, 8, 2 ; ♣—K, Q, 3 is a sound "One Spade" bid, and preferable, in my opinion, to a "No Trump" bid.

An initial bid of a major suit headed by a 10 or without an honour is right only with a suit of six when there are three outside certain tricks.

♠—10, 9, 8, 7, 3, 2 ; ♥—3 ; ♦—A, 8, 5 ; ♣—A, K, 2 is quite a sound bid of "One Spade." But do not bid "Two Spades" on it.

A suit of seven, even although there is no honour, is worth bidding, but the side strength must be at least three probable tricks. ♠—9, 8, 7, 5, 4, 3, 2 ; ♥—A ; ♦A, J, 2 ; ♣—K, 3, is worth a "One Spade" bid—not two or three. Many players prefer to bid one No Trump or one Diamond on such a hand. But I confidently recommend an initial bid of "One Spade."

You will understand, of course, that these conditions apply only to the major suits.

Minor Suit Initial Bids

The "Quick Trick" System is particularly useful in minor suits. As game can very seldom be won from love score on either Diamond or Club bids, it is self-evident that a rational use of low bids in these suits, to show assistance to partner on any call best suiting his hand, is extremely important. Chances to win games are worth moderate risks. Informatory bids on the "Quick Trick" System involve very small risks—about one chance in fifty. As the American writer, Mr. E. V. Shepard, puts it, "They often enable heavy scores to be made, both by enabling the best final call to be made, and also by enabling partner more frequently and more safely to double opposing bids. He can do this by the knowledge that he possesses of what tricks the informatory bidder can probably win. This is a very important feature of a scientifically played game."

A sound initial bid of "One" of a minor suit should, therefore, be made only on strength and not on length.

The irreducible minimum is a suit of three or four headed by A, K. Other combinations which warrant an initial bid of one of a minor suit are two Aces (one of which must be in the minor suit named) or a minor suit headed by K, Q, and an outside Ace or even two short suits headed by K, Q.

The system therefore rules out initial bids on five or six to the K, Q, without an outside quick trick. It also rules out an initial bid K, J high (a favourite bid with many players).

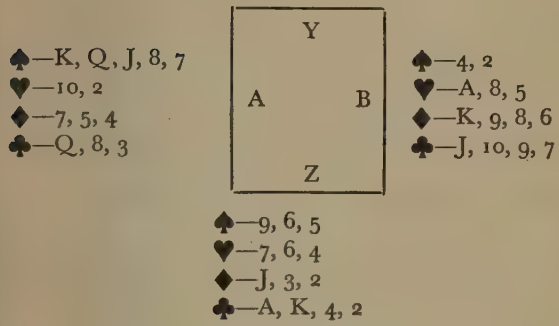
The initial bid of "One" in a minor suit says, "Partner, my hand is not good enough to bid 'No Trumps' or a major suit. At the same time it is not a dud hand. I have two certain tricks, one or both in the suit I bid."

The practical advantages of such a bid must be patent to all. If, holding two quick tricks, you pass, your partner is left in the dark.

It is certain if you do not bid at first you will not be able to bid later in the proceedings.

Here is an example from play. Z dealt, and held : ♠—9, 6, 5 ; ♥—7, 6, 4 ; ♦—J, 3, 2 ; ♣—A, K, 4, 2—a poor hand, and one on which many players would pass. But Z,

being a " Quick Trick " bidder, called " One Club," A called " One Spade," and Y " One No Trump." He made three No Trumps.



If Z had not called " One Club " initially, Y would have called Hearts over the Spades and could not have gone game.

Playing in Hearts, he must lose one Heart, two Spades, and one Diamond. The only game making declaration was No Trumps.

One hand, of course, proves nothing, and it is true Y could not have gone game if the Ace of Hearts had been with A. But the point is that Z's bid on the barest minimum enabled Y to make a winning declaration which he could never have made.

It frequently happens that you hold short minor suits with quick tricks. If you pass on these holdings, you lose the one and only opportunity you have of showing them, and leave your partner in doubt as to whether you have anything of value in your hand. Suppose, for instance, you

have ♣—A, K, Q in your hand and nothing else of value, and you say "No bid," you cramp your partner's bidding.

He may only want to know that you can stop Clubs to go "No Trumps." And, even if he is not able to bid "No Trumps," your Club bid encourages him to make a better bid. He knows that your hand is not worthless.

Do not misunderstand me. The short-suit bid of a minor suit is not an "invitation" to your partner to bid "No Trumps." It is merely an assurance to him that he will find at least two quick tricks in your hand no matter how the bidding goes.

I extend this theory still further, and recommend a minor suit bid on two Aces. Thus, holding :

(1) ♠—A, x, x ; ♥—x, x, x ; ♦—A, x, x, x ; ♣—x, x, x
(2) ♠—x, x ; ♥—x, x, x ; ♦—A, x, x, x ; ♣—A, x, x, x

you should bid on (1) "One Diamond" ; on (2) "One Club."

This, I know, is not universally regarded as sound. But I have seldom found it get me into trouble when playing with an intelligent partner, while on most occasions I have observed its advantages.

It is strange that many players who object to a minor suit bid on two Aces bid a "No Trump" on three bare Aces —a bid of which I am not particularly fond. But almost everybody agrees that three Aces justify a "No Trump" bid.

In my opinion, it is always advisable to show a minor suit when you hold two Aces.

Of course, if your two Aces are in the major suits (both short) you will not bid, but if one or both are in minor suits you will bid the minor.

It has been calculated roughly only five per cent. of the declarations at Bridge are played in Clubs, and only eleven per cent. in Diamonds. The reason is that the average maximum trick making capacity of any two good hands is ten tricks. To make eleven tricks with two hands requires an abnormal card distribution.

Some players have realised so much the futility of bidding minor suits that they will not call them at all. This,

to my mind, is rushing to the other extreme and depriving oneself of a useful weapon.

The danger of being left in with a bid of one of a short minor suit is infinitesimal. The initial informatory bid of a minor suit doubles your partner's chances to bid, while it involves a two per cent. chance of being left in and defeated. A player afraid to accept such odds is out of place at the Bridge table. It ought to be recognised that an initial bid of one of a minor suit is not an attacking bid. That is to say, it does not show necessarily a desire to play the hand in the suit named. It is defensive and informatory. To neglect to bid it because of its shortness and the weakness of the rest of the hand is to miss great opportunities.

But the position is more difficult when you have, say, six or even seven of a minor suit and little or no strength outside.

That it is seldom of use to keep on " punting " in it when a major suit is being called against you should be an axiom. But it doesn't seem to be. I know several players who have a passion for bidding up in the minors. How often does one suffer from a partner who will not stop bidding in Clubs and Diamonds because he has a string of them, and nothing else of value in his hand.

When he gets to a bid of five which he had not the courage to bid at first he is usually doubled, and goes down at least 300 points. This doesn't teach him, as it ought, a salutary lesson. He goes on in the same old way time after time.

The point to recognise is that with a strong major suit called against you by your opponents, nine times out of ten it is a mistake to go on with your minor. One of two things is bound to happen ; either you are not going to play it in the minor suit, or, if you do, your contract has to be so high that you are bound to be fined.

How to bid long minor suits is dealt with in the chapter on pre-emptive bids.

Initial Bids of Two of a Suit

The voluntary initial bid of two of a suit has a peculiar fascination for the weak player.

This fact is so marked that you might almost judge a

man's status at the game by his predilection for this particular bid.

Certain players in my own circles are registered in my mind as "Two Bidders." I love them as men, but I hate them as partners, because I never know what they are driving at. There seems to me no method in their madness. Sometimes they bid "Two" on a suit of six headed by Q, J. On other occasions they make the same bid, holding a suit of six, headed by A, K, or K, Q. Or they will make the bid on a suit of six or seven headed only by Queen or even Jack.

I have tried to work out the reason for this strange obsession, and can attribute it only to a mixture of fear and selfishness, combined with a dim recollection of an old and discarded convention when Auction Bridge was in its infancy, and an initial bid of two meant length without "tops."

For years I have been tilting against this bid of "Two" because of its essential weakness.

First of all it is apt to destroy team work, because partner is left in doubt as to its meaning. But while it can, and frequently does, shut out the partner from bidding, it has the reverse effect on the adversaries. It encourages and heartens them to bid.

"Here is this poor boob of a player trying to get the contract with a miserable bid of 'Two.' We'll show him. We'll *larn* him," they think.

The truth is the initial "Two" bid is neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor good red herring.

It is not pre-emptive. It tends to stifle the partner and stimulate the opponents, and it is not a winning bid unless partner happens to hold a hand that exactly fits, when a bid of "One" would have achieved the purpose just as well and without any mystification.

The Americans, with their passion for standardisation, have attempted to conventionalise the "Two" bid. Mr. Milton Work, in his latest book, states that the bid, whether in a major or minor, means a suit of six cards headed by the three top honours with no particular strength in the other suits.

No doubt if this were *universally* recognised as the meaning of a " Two " bid all would be well, but, as even Mr. Work has been unable to impose this use on the American card-playing public, the adoption of it can be regarded as little short of a secret convention, which should not be used unless its signification is previously explained to partner and opponents.

Another American writer states, " The necessity of an explanation is an important reason why the opening bid of " Two " should be abandoned. Another reason is that its merit is very questionable. The fact that it will prove a winner with certain particular declarations does not necessarily prove its worth. Many of the best players and authorities on the game are absolutely opposed to this bid, chiefly because it tends to stop helpful bidding by the opponents.

" Everything considered, the logical conclusion to reach is that the opening bid of two should not be used. We have enough, perhaps too many, arbitrary conventions, without including one which is of doubtful value. If a standard set of conventions is ever adopted it is probable the opening bid of ' Two ' will not be included."

With these sentiments I fully agree.

The best argument in favour of the " Two " bid is that, since the four-card suit bid has been adopted so widely, a bid of two should be made to show length in addition to strength. There is a good deal to be said for this in *major* suit bidding. If first caller bids " One " he may hold only four. If he bids " Two " you know that he holds at least six. You may therefore support him more lightly when he bids " Two " than you dare do when he bids " One."

Against this, however, must be set the disadvantages of being left in doubt as to what the six suit comprises. Is it six to the A, K, six to the K, Q, or six to the K, J ; or some other combination ? It seems to me that, with six of the suit, often it can be more profitably bid or re-bid on the second round of bidding, and that the initial " Two " bid is ineffective.

English opinion is divided on the question. But the view

of the best authorities is that initial two-trick bids should be confined to the two major suits, and must have real top honour strength behind them.

An initial bid of two of a minor suit never should be made.

There is no such thing as a justifiable initial two-trick call in a minor suit.

My own practice is never to make an initial " Two " bid in a major suit at love score. If I hold a hand on which pre-emptive tactics appear necessary, or on which I should be prepared to go up anyway, I bid three straight away. I favour an initial bid of " Three " as much as I dislike a bid of " Two." On some of the hands on which players bid " Two " I should bid " Three." On others I should bid " One." On others, again, I should pass, and hope to be able to bid on the second round.

Two Suiters.

When you are in the happy position of holding two good suits—especially two good major suits—it is important to bid them properly. Two suiters are a valuable possession which do not occur every day. A hand made up of two suits only is a wonderful game winner. Seven of one suit and six of another is a powerful combination, on which you can bid high. But some puzzles often arise. Take this hand from actual play.

Dealer held : ♠—J, 10, 9, 8, 5, 4, 3 ; ♥—None ; ♦—None ; ♣—A, K, Q, 10, 5, 3. How should that hand be called ?

I will tell you how the bidding went. The dealer, Z, called " Three Spades." A, " Four Hearts." Y (Z's partner), doubled. And Z took him out of the double into " Four Spades," which was promptly doubled by A. Z made his doubled contract, losing three Spades—the A, K, and Q were against him in one hand—and nothing else.

A well-known player to whom I submitted this hand said : " Z's call was quite wrong. He ought to have opened with ' One Club,' and waited to bid his Spades until later." But I do not agree. In the first place, if Z had called Clubs first, it is possible that the bid might have been left

in, and he would have missed a game hand. While I object on general principles to a pre-emptive bid on a suit Jack high, circumstances alter cases. The fact that the hand was a two suiter with a solid side suit made all the difference. In Z's position I should have called " Four Spades " straight away—not three. The bid of four would have necessitated a Heart call of five, and neither A nor B would have ventured, although, as it happened, they could have made five Hearts between them if they had only known.

The hand I have given is somewhat in the nature of a freak. Let us consider the more ordinary combination, such as five or six cards of two suits. In this case first bid the higher of two " equal " suits of the same length. Equal suits are Hearts and Spades, because each must win four odd to go game from love. Clubs and Diamonds are also equal suits. Suppose you hold : ♠—A, Q, J, x, x, and ♥—A, K, x, x, x, bid " One Spade " in preference to " One Heart." If the bidding proceeds, show your Hearts on the second round. Your partner will then support you in whichever suit he is stronger. If Hearts do not suit him he will put you back to Spades without increasing the bid. But if he is stronger in Hearts than in Spades, he will leave the Heart bid.

Calling your hand in this way gives your partner a double option, and shows him that you have a two-suiter.

With a suit of six and a suit of five, bid the suit of six first, even though the five be stronger

♠—A, K, Q, 5, 2 ; ♥—A, J, 10, 7, 6, 3. " One Heart " is a better bid than " One Spade."

The added ability to stand a force which the extra trump gives may mean the difference between going game and going down.

If, at an advanced score, you can go game on a long minor suit, bid it before you show a shorter major suit. If the minor suit is both longer and stronger, you may even re-bid it before showing the shorter and weaker major suit. At any score and with equivalent tops, show a minor suit of seven cards before a major suit of five. Thus : ♦—A, K,

x, x, x, x, x ; ♥—A, K, x, x, x. "One Diamond" is the better opening call.

Should your partner assist your first bid, it is not necessary to show your second suit. Sound opponents know the deadly nature of a two suiter, and will be likely to make it all the harder for you if you show a second suit. A concealed suit is a valuable asset.

It is seldom that a two suiter can be played to advantage in No Trumps. Should your partner bid No Trumps and you hold a two suiter, you should take him out, showing him first one suit, then, if he re-bids his No Trumper, show your second. Thus your partner has called No Trumps. You hold : ♠—Q, J, 10, x, x, x ; ♥—K, J, 10, x, x, x. Bid "Two Spades" over him, and, if he goes back to "Two No Trumps," bid "Three Hearts." But beware of bidding a two suiter originally on ragged cards or hands only Queen high. With this combination : ♥—Q, 10, 7, 6, 5, 2 ; ♣—A, K, J, 7, 3, the right initial bid is undoubtedly "One Club." The Hearts should not be mentioned until the second round of bidding.

New Ideas about No Trumpers

While the making of suit bids on less strength than was formerly considered sound has been very widely adopted, the very reverse process has taken place with regard to No Trumpers.

The light No Trumper has been abandoned by the best players. It was always a doubtful proposition, and, while there are still to be found "No Trump" fiends who bid on an Ace and a couple of "hopes," at clubs where the game is played seriously and scientifically the light No Trumper is dead.

I was one of the first writers on Bridge to point out some years ago the disadvantages of bidding No Trumps on three bare Aces at love score. Gradually a number of players have come round to my view. Plenty are still left who always bid on three Aces, and even on less strength, but I believe their number is diminishing, and that experience proves it is not a sound proposition.

Do not misunderstand me. I am not advocating a pass on three Aces. Certainly not. I recommend an " approaching " bid of one of a minor suit. This " feeler " may enable you to bid No Trumps on second round, or it may warn you off it. Seldom does it do any harm, and in my experience it nearly always brings about good results in finding out the best bid for your partner and you.

I should never go so far as to condemn a player for bidding " One No Trump " on three bare Aces, but I only give it as my considered opinion, after a number of test hands, that the minor suit opening bid pans out better.

But, even admitting that three bare Aces justify a " No Trump " bid, let us come to the consideration of what constitutes the minimum strength on which at love score an opening bid of " No Trumps " should be made. The old view was that you must have three suits securely stopped. There were also advocates of two-suiter No Trumpers. The modern idea is that with a worthless singleton or worthless doubleton it is much better to open with a suit bid than a No Trumper. At least as much strength is required for a " No Trump " bid as for a suit bid.

It must depend upon what may be called the general context of the hand as to whether you choose a suit or a No Trumper. As a general rule it follows that when your four-card suit is a minor and you have guards in the other three suits, you choose a No Trumper, But when your four-card suit is a major you choose the suit bid rather than the No Trumper.

Consider these hands:

(1) ♠—A, Q, 10, x ; ♥—K, J, 9, x ; ♦—A, 10, x, x ; ♣—x.

Original bid should be " One Spade," not " One No Trump."

(2) ♠—A, 10, x, x ; ♥—A, K, J, x ; ♦—K, x, x ; ♣—x, x.

Original bid should be " One Heart," in preference to " One No Trump."

(3) ♠—A, Q, 10, x ; ♥—K, J, x ; ♦—x, x, x ; ♣—K, J, x.

Original bid " One No Trump," not " One Spade."

(4) ♠—x, x, x ; ♥—A, x, x ; ♦—A, K, x, x ; ♣—K, J, x.

Original bid " One No Trump."

(5) ♠—K, x, x ; ♥—K, x, x ; ♦—K, x, x, x ; ♣—A, x, x.

Original bid " One No Trump."

(6) ♠—A, x ; ♥—K, x, x ; ♦—K, x, x, x ; ♣—K, x, x, x.

Original bid " One No Trump."

You will notice the slight difference on which the bid depends. No. 2 is a border-line example, and it is only the worthless doubleton that makes it a better " Heart " than " No Trump " bid. In No. 3 the fact that you hold three Diamonds instead of two makes all the difference, while in No. 4 your four-card suit is a minor and the outside strength justifies a minimum No Trumper. Nos. 5 and 6 are interesting and, you may say, not stronger than three Aces. But they have great potential value, and in my opinion came up to the standard I set as a minimum

The point is that you may have a very powerful hand, even let us suppose with nine tricks in it as soon as you get in, but with a singleton of a suit. You may think it is odds on your partner protecting that suit, but he doesn't. How often have you seen this occur ?

Here is a case from observation. Z dealt, holding : ♠—A, Q, J, 9 ; ♥—A, K, 5, 2 ; ♦—A, K, Q, 6 ; ♣—J. A very powerful hand. He called " One No Trump," was left in with it, and his adversaries made six Clubs against him. In Spades or Hearts he could have gone game. This is no exceptional experience. The old advice that strength in three suits is a good No Trumper has proved to be wrong. With a singleton, or even a doubleton, open with a suit bid in preference to " No Trumps."

Two-Suit No Trumpers

It is a surprising fact that many players who make very light No Trumpers will not bid on two suiters. So long as they have a guard, however weak, in three suits, they are ready to bid, but on hands potentially stronger they will pass. Two unguarded suits scare them.

Now, as already stated, I am no advocate of the ultra light No Trumper, but experience has shown me that to pass with a two suiter is often to miss valuable opportunities. There is, of course, risk in the matter, but equally there is risk in bidding No Trumps on three Aces, or even on slightly greater strength. The point to consider is how it works out on balance, presuming your partner to hold average cards.

The " No Trumps " bid with two defenceless suits is advisable only when both strong suits are short. Otherwise bidding either suit might mislead your partner, and passing might cause a game hand to be thrown in.

What is the barest minimum on which these two suiters should be called ? Here are three types :

(1) ♠—A, K, x ; ♥—A, Q, 10 ; ♦—x, x, x ; ♣—x, x, x, x.

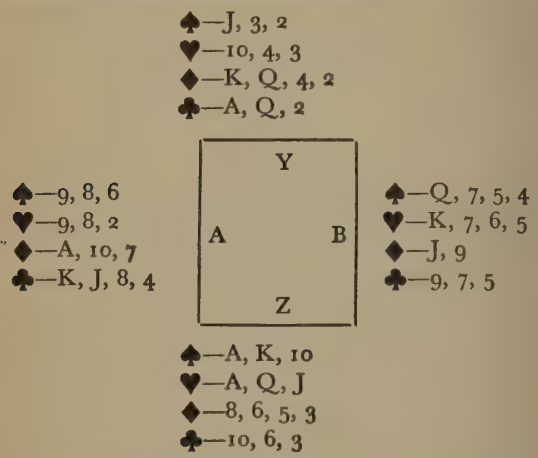
(2) ♠—A, Q, J ; ♥—A, Q, 10 ; ♦—x, x, x, x ; ♣—x, x, x.

(3) ♠—A, K, Q ; ♥—A, J, x ; ♦—x, x, x, x ; ♣—x, x, x.

Each of these hands has three or four trick value, and is really stronger and has greater possibilities than three bare Aces. Yet I think the majority of players, even the light " No Trump " bidders, would pass on them. They would not consider them up even to their meagre standard because of the two unguarded suits. And yet if you experiment with them, giving yourself these hands and then dealing out the cards to the other three players, you will see how profitable, in the majority of cases, an initial bid of " No Trumps " on them is shown to be.

Note that in all cases the hands are strong in the major suits, but the holding in no instance is sufficient to justify a major suit bid. The alternative to bidding " No Trumps " is to pass. But if you do, it is more than likely that your hand will be thrown in. Your partner, with a fair hand, will be unlikely to bid, and neither opponent, unless exceptionally strong in a minor suit, is likely to open the bidding.

Here is an example from actual play :



If Z says " No bid " all the players pass and the hand is thrown in. But if Z bids " No Trumps " he should make a small slam, as A opens the 4 of Clubs, which Z passes up and takes with the 10. The value of this hand is that it has no exaggerated feature. You may say that it is a lucky hand which just by chance happens to fit. But make Y's hand slightly weaker and you will still see the advantage of Z's bid. At first sight it might seem impossible that on Z's hand, with little more than average assistance from partner, a small slam could be made. I repeat that the only way to test the soundness of these two-suiter bids is by experiment.

With two suiters, the strength of which is in the minor suits, I do not advocate an initial No Trumper. Thus with :

(1) ♠—x, x, x ; ♥—x, x, x, x ; ♦—A, K, x ; ♣—A, Q, 10.

(2) ♠—x, x, x, x ; ♥—x, x, x ; ♦—A, Q, J ; ♣—A, Q, 10.

(3) ♠—x, x, x ; ♥—x, x, x, x ; ♦—A, J, x ; ♣—A, K, Q.

I should bid on Nos. 1 and 2 one Diamond, and on No. 3 one Club, on the " Quick Trick " System. The distinction is that you may bid a minor suit, even of three, to show quick tricks, but you must not bid a major suit on less than four or five, and if on four you must have three high honours of it, or at least two with compensating outside strength. The bidding of a minor suit on hands such as this, while it is not to be construed into an " invitation " to your partner to bid " No Trumps," assures him that you possess at least two quick tricks. The reason why I advise a " No Trump " bid on major two-suit strength and not on minor-suit strength will be abundantly clear to all experienced players.

One word of warning. I do not recommend these two-suit " No Trump " bids to beginners or to inexperienced or poor players.

It is better team work for a poor player to await and then advance his partner's bid than to make a doubtful initial bid himself. But the advanced player who is sure of himself, and knows he can extract the last ounce in the play of the hand, can safely bid these two suiters with the assurance of profit to himself.

In my experience these two-suit No Trumpers turn out better as a rule than hands which contain only three bare Aces.

All the same, at a dangerous score, or in the rubber game, I should always call " No Trumps " on three bare Aces.

But at love score I recommend a bid of a minor suit to test the market and find out how the cards lie, and whether partner has anything to say.

You may retort that the two suiters on which I recommend a bid of " No Trumps " also presume a good hand with your partner. That is true up to a point, but not to the same extent. In the types given each hand is potentially worth more than three tricks, while in the third type the hand is worth certainly four tricks. All these hands are rather better than three bare Aces, while the fact that they contain three and four cards of the minor suit makes it unlikely, with a reasonable distribution of the cards, that a long minor will be played out against them.

These hands must be carefully distinguished from other types of hands which offer a choice between a No Trumper and a major suit. With a worthless singleton or doubleton a major suit bid even on four is to be preferred to a No Trumper.

Pre-emptive Bids

" *The general tendency among the best players is away from pre-emptive bidding and towards co-operative bidding by partners.*"

The above quotation by an American writer, Mr. R. E. Needham, is an apt opening to this section on " Pre-emptive Bidding."

I deprecate the fashion of a number of young and dashing players of making big initial bids indiscriminately. It is a very bad habit. It destroys partnership and team work. It is selfish, unscientific, and destructive of the finer points of the game.

Miss Florence Irwin, the American writer, says : " The pre-emptive bid is never both necessary and effective. When it is necessary (or seems to be) it is not effective. When it is effective it is not necessary. . . . I have never seen a pre-emptive bid that was both necessary and effective." With this dictum I disagree entirely.

In my view the pre-emptive bid, *properly used*, is a most valuable and effective weapon. My experience has been exactly the contrary to that of Miss Irwin. I have seen the pre-emptive bid win games and rubbers which would never have been won without it, and I have seen it save

games and rubbers that would never have been saved by any other means.

At love score the only pre-emptive bids that are likely to be effective are Three of a major suit or Five of a minor. An initial bid of Two is neither one thing nor the other.

What is the object of a pre-emptive bid?

It is an attempt to shut out adversaries and partners from bidding and to secure the contract comparatively cheaply. The bid does not necessarily by any means promise game. It is, in a sense, a confession of weakness. It says, "Partner, my hand is useless, or almost useless, in defence. If I am to do any good I must play in my suit." That is what the pre-emptive bid should mean. A player opens the bidding with "Three Hearts," hoping that this will shut out further bidding and that he may not have to bid "Four Hearts."

The very best pre-emptive bid is "Three Spades," because that is, as a rule, a most effective shut-out bid, and more often than not prevents opponents showing their strength when it is divided between them.

The pre-emptive bid should be restricted absolutely to certain types of hands, mainly freak hands, and should be used only when occasion demands.

The pre-emptive bid, therefore, should be an exceptional bid, in so far as the types of hands which justify it are of comparatively rare occurrence.

Not "May I?" but "Must I?"

The right attitude of the player should be not, "*May* I make a pre-emptive bid?" but "*Must* I make a pre-emptive bid?" There are hands in which a pre-emptive bid is quite permissible and justifiable, but absolutely unnecessary. In these cases the good player will be content to start with a small bid and work up gradually. Then there are the special hands which demand—nay, shriek for—pre-emptive treatment. Here the sound player will go all out for it. He will not be content with half measures, but will "pre-empt" up to the hilt.

To justify a major suit pre-emptive bid, the hand should contain :

1. Length in the major suit, seven at least (not six) to K or Q, or eight to any honour.
2. Weakness in the other major suit.
3. Little or no defence.

The following are examples of hands which demand pre-emptive treatment :

1. ♠.—Q, J, x, x, x, x, x, ; ♥—x x ; ♦—A, x ; ♣—A, x.
2. ♠—K, Q, J, 10, x, x, x ; ♥—x ; ♦—x, x ; ♣—x, x, x.
3. ♠—Q, x, x, x, x, x, x, x ; ♥—x ; ♦—K, Q ; ♣—A, x.

On all these hands a bid of " Three Spades " should be made at once. You will notice that while the suits Queen high require some side strength, the suit headed by quart to the King should be called even without outside strength.

Pre-emptive bids should be reserved for hands which are not perfectly sound bids of " One." When you hold a hand containing three quick tricks, as a general rule a pre-emptive bid should not be made.

The reason is that with three quick tricks you do not desire necessarily to shut out your partner or opponents from making a bid.

With a " certainty," as for instance when you hold nine tricks in your hand in one of the major suits, a pre-emptive bid is not necessary, and it is generally better to start bidding low and go up gradually. By so doing you are more likely to get the double you desire than if you dash in with a big bid at the start.

Always remember that the proper pre-emptive bid is a gamble. If you have a defenceless hand you are faced with the alternative of surrendering without firing a shot, or putting it to the test with a strong attack. You are justified in gambling. But if you hold a hand with three sure tricks for the defence you are not on the horns of a dilemma, and therefore are not justified in gambling. You are bound to give your partner a chance to speak.

Minor Suit Pre-emptive Bids

At love score, an initial pre-emptive bid of a minor suit of less than four or five is ineffective. An initial bid of " Three " seldom achieves its purpose.

The hands that demand pre-emptive bidding are eight to the K, Q, or to the A, Q, J.

The point of pre-emptive bidding in a minor suit is that it should show a hand which is unlikely to be of use in a No Trumper.

Here is an example of a sound pre-emptive bid of " Five Diamonds " : ♠—K, 5 ; ♥—3 ; ♦—K, J, 10, 8, 6, 4, 3, 2 ; ♣—A, K. The outside strength in Clubs and the weakness in the major suits justify the bid.

I dislike intensely a bid of a suit headed by K, J, but with eight cards in the suit and outside two quick tricks and a-possible trick in Spades, a bid of " Five " on such a combination is sound.

CHAPTER III

Secondary Bids

Secondary or forced bids are on a different footing from initial bids. In the technical sense a secondary bid is a bid made by a player who has passed first or who shifts to another suit after the first bid of the partnership.

A secondary bid does not of necessity show any specific high cards, and, consequently, is not as informative as an initial bid. It is correctly made on long, weak suits in hands that may be good for little or nothing unless that suit becomes trumps.

The distinction between an initial and a secondary bid is often insufficiently appreciated. Some of the biggest penalties at Auction arise from injudicious support of secondary bids. There are some partners with whom it is absolutely unsafe to make a secondary bid. As soon as you call two of a suit they seem to imagine you possess the earth, and support you sky high.

Now, what is the minimum requirement for a secondary bid, and how should it be interpreted ?

I place it at six of the suit K or Q, J high with no outside tricks, or even five to Q, J, 10, with an outside Ace. Remember I cite these as the barest minimum. I am not now dealing with the take-out when your partner has gone No Trumps, but with the position when, as Dealer, you have passed and other calls have been made. Presuming your partner has made a bid which you cannot support, you will be justified in making a secondary bid on the holdings I have named. And he has no right to be deceived by it. He should not support it unless he holds one or two honours in the suit and some outside strength, nor should he go No Trumps on the strength of it.

Many players find a difficulty in distinguishing between a

secondary bid and a bid that is made to deny a suit. But both mean the same. They convey the information that the suit has little or no defensive value, and that, so far as the Declarer is concerned, the best way to give value to the hand is to allow the suit to be trumps.

Of course, if there have been no intervening bids, you know that the bid is probably a denial of your suit. Suppose you have called " One Spade " on ♠—A, K, J, 9, 7 ; ♥—8, 2 ; ♦—A, 5, 3 ; ♣—K, 6, 2. Your left-hand opponent calls " Two Diamonds," and your partner " Two Hearts." What should you do when your turn comes round to bid again ?

Certainly leave the two Hearts. You should not bid your Spades again. Your partner has " denied " them. The two Diamond bidder may be luring you on because he has length in Spades. Nor should you go " No Trumps," because you have no right to expect your partner has top honours in Hearts. His is a secondary bid, and his Hearts may be Q, J high, or even J high. Your hand is likely to be useful to him, but you do not know that his is good for " No Trumps " or Spades.

The Assist

One of the greatest difficulties is to know when and how far to assist your partner. How often one hears the remark : " If only you had put me up, partner, we should have won the game." Or : " If only you had not supported me I should not have gone on."

Judgment and discrimination are necessary in this matter. Of course, here, as in other points of bidding, psychology plays its part. There are partners whom it is positively fatal to put up. Just give them one raise and they will bid sky high, land you in appalling disaster, and then blame you because you assisted them once.

Then there are the other timid, backward partners who need encouragement. If they make a bid a tall you know it is so genuine that you can afford to support them on slight strength.

But, of course, one must ignore these personal factors in giving general advice.

As soon as your partner has made a bid, decide whether your cards justify an immediate raise, and, if so, how many times you can justifiably raise. If you lack an immediate raise and your partner continues to bid, decide after how many re-bids you can properly assist. It is obvious that if your partner goes to three of a suit on his own hand without your having spoken, you can assist with less strength than if he had stopped at two.

A sound opening bid in a major suit proclaims ability to win four tricks in all. You have no right to assume greater strength in it than this. To raise your partner's bid from one to two, therefore, you should have four probable tricks. But it is very necessary to realise what are probable tricks in *support*. A hand which may be of no use for bidding purposes itself may yet be an admirable hand for assisting your partner.

If you have three of your partner's suit—no matter how small those three may be—you have what is termed the normal expectancy. Suppose he has called on five of the suit, or even on only four, it means that he and you hold the majority of trumps between you. With normal trump strength count assisting tricks as follows : two for a void side suit, one for a singleton, one for two doubletons, and one for each high trump honour held. But, holding only two small trumps, count only one trick for a void suit, count nothing for either a singleton or two doubletons, because opponents will probably lead trumps and prevent a ruff. There is a world of difference between holding two or three of your partner's suit.

Take this case : Your partner bids " One Heart," and you hold : ♠—K, 7, 4, 2 ; ♥—A, 8, 3 ; ♦—5, 2 ; ♣—J, 8, 7, 4. You cannot support him in Hearts even though you have the Ace. You have only two assisting tricks, one Heart and one possible trick in Spades. You are two tricks short of raising value. Now suppose he bids " One Spade," and you have the same hand, you have at least three assisting tricks, probably four, and should put him up if he bids " Two Spades " to three.

Now, suppose he bids " One Club," you may at once raise him to " Two," because you have three assisting side tricks, the Ace, the King, and the doubleton plus one trump trick, due to the possession of four small Clubs. But if he bids Diamonds, you cannot assist him, nor are you strong enough to branch into " No Trumps."

Is there any rule of thumb which will enable a player to know exactly when and how far he can support ?

In an American book the following " Rule of Five," by Mr. E. V. Shepard, gives a rough and ready idea of reckoning assisting values. First of all, before assisting your partner's initial bid, you must not assume that it shows anything more than the minimum requirement. In these days of forward bidding an initial bid may be on only four of a suit. You must not, therefore, assume that your partner's initial bid of " One " means anything more than ability to make four tricks if the suit he mentions is the trump suit.

That is the first consideration. But if your partner re-bids his suit the matter is different. You then know that he does not require so much support from you as you might gather from his original bid.

" *Rule of Five* "

" Each unaided re-bid by partner announces ability to win two more tricks than shown by his previous declaration, inviting your assistance upon one less trick than needed to raise his preceding bid.

" To enable players to recall easily the number of tricks required to assist an opening bid or an unaided re-bid of partner, I devised the following

" Rule of Five : Subtract from 5 partner's last bid ; the difference shows the number of tricks you must hold to assist.

" For example, partner opens the bidding with ' One Heart ' ; you subtract 1 from 5, the difference is 4, showing that you need 4 tricks total to bid ' Two Hearts.' Suppose that partner raises his own opening bid to ' Two Hearts ' ;

5 minus 2 equals 3, showing that you require only 3 tricks to aid him. Should he twice re-bid without your help, you know that you need only 2 tricks to bid 'Four Hearts,' and so on."

Then there is the important matter of valuing your hand for support. A hand may be very weak—it may even be a Yarborough—and yet be most useful in support.

Suppose you hold three trumps. Value your trumps as 2 tricks for ruffing a suit in which you are void ; 1 trick for a singleton, 1 trick for two doubletons, 1 trick for any high trump honour—A, K, or Q.

Then there are other considerations. Suppose your partner makes a pre-emptive bid of three of a suit and you hold four or five of his suit. That support is likely to be of little value unless you are short or bare in one or two other suits. What he wants from you is outside tricks.

The following two rules will prove useful :

" (1) Regardless of side values, never assist partner's bid for which you lack normal trump support unless partner re-bids once for each trump you are short.

" (2) Unless partner pre-empts, to find the assisting value of your hand, deduct from its side tricks one trick for a single trump less than normal, or two tricks for either two or three trumps less than required for normal support."

One piece of advice I would give to the cheery optimists who think they can support very lightly is : *Do not take too roseate a view of an initial No Trumper.* You never know of what it may consist. It may be a bare three Aces. It may be less susbtantial even than that. Suppose it is three Aces, and the No Trumper is overcalled with " Two Spades." You have a good guard in Spade—a double guard perhaps —but little or nothing in your hand outside. Should you raise to " Two No Trumps ? " I think not. It is true that it is possible that Spades may be the one and only suit which your partner fears, and in which he is weak. In this case he may be able to make a second bid, which will then enable you to put him back into " No Trumps " if it seems advisable. Or, supposing he does not make a second bid and he has a strong hand, the opposition is not going to do much

good in the Spade suit. Under either condition you will do no harm by not raising him, whereas, if his should be a weak No Trumper, your raise may lead you into penalties when there was no necessity to take the risk.

Here is a case illustrating the point: Z, "One No Trump"; holding Aces of Hearts, Diamonds, and Clubs, and nothing else of value. A, "Two Spades"; on ♠—A, J, 10, x, x, x; ♥—K, Q; ♦—K, Q, x; ♣—Q, J. Y, "Two No Trumps"; on ♠—K, Q, 9, x, and King of Clubs only card of value outside. Result: Z two down on his contract—loss 100 points less 30 Aces = − 70 points.

The moral is that to support an initial No Trump you require some strength outside the suit called against the No Trumper.

That you should never support your partner after an adverse call unless you have a single guard in the suit named against you, and considerable strength outside, or a double guard with less outside strength, should be a maxim. Occasions arise when you hold such a good hand, but no actual guard, that you are tempted to depart from it. You argue that it is a "moral certainty" that your partner must have a guard to have ventured No Trumps. But remember moral certainties are not actual certainties. They have a way of disappointing. How often does one find Declarer and Dummy unguarded in the same suit, with "tricks to burn" in the other three suits?

The Denial and Take-Out

Some players have a perfect passion for taking out their partner's bids unnecessarily, often disastrously.

Sometimes it arises from selfishness, the desire to play the hands; sometimes from distrust; but more often from erroneous ideas about the theory of bidding.

Of course, if you distrust your partner's bidding and play, it is tempting to take him out when you have a good bid yourself, even when you have support for him. But it is a temptation to be resisted, as, apart from the ill-feeling engendered, it more often than not leads to trouble.

It is a leap in the dark that does not deserve to succeed even when it comes off.

But the wrong-headedness of so many players is founded on some mysterious idea that they " must show their suit."

How often does one hear this kind of thing : " I had to bid my suit, partner, but did not do it to prevent you going on. I meant to support you on the next round."

There has been no next round, and the mischief is done.

Denying a Bid.

The object of the bidding at Auction Bridge—it cannot be rubbed in too often—is to arrive at the best bid for game with the twenty-six cards held by the partners.

But many players who bid their own hands quite well are often very hazy in partnership in the matter of support or denial.

There are occasions when you *must* deny your partner's suit by telling him in the language of Bridge that you have no support in it. There are occasions when you *may* deny his suit—that is to say, the denial is optional. And there are occasions when, however tempting it looks, you *should not* deny his suit.

Let us examine these positions.

First of all, what is a denial ? If your partner bids " One " of a minor suit it is not a denial of his suit if you take him out into a major suit bid or into " No Trumps." Presumably he is not anxious to play the game in the minor. Therefore, if you can, you show him your best major suit or bid " No Trumps." It does not at all necessarily follow that you have no support in the minor suit he has called, but, as it requires five by cards to go game in a minor, you try a major suit in the hope that it will fit his hand. If it does not, he in his turn must deny your major suit.

But it is *always* denial if, having bid a major suit, your partner takes you out into a minor. He then says : " Partner, I cannot help you at all in the suit you have named, but I have a good minor suit in which we may be able to do business."

Taking from one major suit into another major suit is, as

a rule, denial. It is sometimes done on a big honours score, but this alone is not an adequate reason. There is something to be said for showing a strong Spade over your partner's Hearts, because, if he has called only one Heart, your bid of " One Spade " does not increase the contract, and you may have an opportunity of re-bidding Hearts if he shows he does not like Spades on second or subsequent rounds. But even this is dangerous, and I do not recommend it. The worst thing is to bid " Two Hearts " over your partner's " One Spade," when you have support in Spades, just because you have strong Hearts. This is a wrong denial. You should only take out a Spade bid into Hearts when you have no support in Spades.

It is not necessarily a denial to bid " No Trumps " over any major suit bid made by your partner. You may have support for your partner's major suit, but the context of your hand may favour a bid of " No Trumps " as the more likely game-winner.

But it is denial of the suit if your partner bids it a second or third time and you still persist in your " No Trumps." Then you say : " Partner, I cannot stand your suit ; I must play this hand in ' No Trumps.' "

What are the situations in which you *must* deny your partner's major suit? The answer is when you hold a singleton or two little ones of his suit. Then, always provided you have a suit of five, headed by A, K, or even Ace, you should deny as a warning that you have no support. Thus, your partner bids " One Spade." You hold : ♠—5 ; ♥—7, 6, 3 ; ♦—Q, 8, 6, 2 ; ♣—A, K, J, 5, 4 ; or ♠—5, 4 ; ♥—7, 6, 3; ♦—Q, 8, 6 ; ♣—A, K, J, 5, 4. You *must* deny the Spade bid with " Two Clubs."

The reason is that, supposing your partner has called on five of his suit (and, remember, he may have called on only four), it follows that, if you hold only two, the adversaries must have six between them. When that is the case, one of the opponents would have four or more cards of the suit in practically sixty-five out of a hundred times. A contract where either adversary has four or more in the trump suit is not apt to produce satisfactory results.

But there is an exception to this less-than-three-cards

requirement. It occurs when you hold A, x ; K, x ; or Q, x of your partner's major suit. This high card-holding is of sufficient strength to constitute the normal expectancy, and therefore with such cards you should not deny your partner's major suit. Nor should you deny when holding three of his suit, *however small the three*. There is all the difference in the world between holding two or three. When your partner has called on five and you hold three, the opponents have only five between them. When this occurs the five adverse cards will be divided three and two twice to every time that they are divided four and one, or are all five in one hand.

Therefore, suppose your partner has called "One Spade," and you hold : ♠—4, 3, 2 ; ♥—7, 6 ; ♦—6, 5 ; ♣—A, K, J, 10, 8, 2. You should not bid "Two Clubs." Although your Spades are the three lowest, the fact that you hold three of them makes a denial wrong. It is highly probable that your partner may be able to get out trumps and make use of your Club suit. Even the fact that you hold six Clubs and he may have called on only four Spades should not influence you. Much less should you be biased by your honours score in Clubs. Your object is to make game, and the game is more probable in Spades.

Now suppose you hold : ♠—4, 3, 2 ; ♥—A, K, Q, 10, 5, 2 ; ♦—7, 2 ; ♣—6, 3, and your partner has bid "One Spade." A denial looks tempting. You have six Hearts, and your partner may have only four or five Spades. Ought you "to show" your Hearts ? Certainly not. Your hand will certainly be useful to your partner, but you have no assurance if you bid Hearts that his will be equally helpful to you. He may have only two small Hearts, or only one, or possibly none. If you take out the Spades into Hearts you are taking a leap in the dark, as, even if he dislikes your bid, he may not be able to get back into Spades after your denial.

Let us now consider a few of the positions where denial is optional. In each case your partner has made an initial bid of "One Spade." You hold :

(1) ♠—4, 3, 2 ; ♥—K, Q. J, 10, 8, 7, 2 ; ♦—7, 2 ; ♣—6.

Here a denial is quite justifiable. Although you hold three Spades, your seven Hearts render it quite likely that you can go game in Hearts more easily than he can in Spades. That you do not hold the Ace of Hearts is also a factor. It means that your Hearts may not help his Spade bid, while if he has top Spades that will materially help in your Heart bid. Therefore I cite this as a case where a denial is optional. It differs from the case given above where the Hearts were A, K, Q, 10, 5, 2.

(2) ♠—A, 2 ; ♥—K, Q, 10 ; ♦—A, Q, J ; ♣—A, K, Q, 9, 5.

Here a take out into " No Trumps " is optional. While it is almost certainly a game hand in Spades, it is still more certainly a game hand in " No Trumps," and you are entitled, therefore, to consider the higher score.

Then there is the position when you hold abnormal length without top honours in Hearts.

(3) ♠—4, 3, 2 ; ♥—Q, J, 10, 9, 7, 6, 5, 2 ; ♦—5 ; ♣—6.

Here, although your hand, with its two singletons, offers quite good support in Spades, it is of such a nature that with Hearts as trumps it is likely to be more profitable. It is a freak hand, and freak hands demand exceptional measures. I consider that on this hand you *should* take out into Hearts, as having the better game-making probability.

Border-line cases are on cards such as :

(4) ♠—A, 3 ; ♥—K, Q, J, 9, 6, 2 ; ♦—7, 2 ; ♣—6, 3, 2.

(5) ♠—K, 2 ; ♥—K, J, 9, 8, 5, 3, 2 ; ♦—7, 2 ; ♣—6, 3.

(6) ♠—Q, 9 ; ♥—K, J, 10, 8, 5, 3, 2 ; ♦—7, 2 ; ♣—6, 3.

In case 4 I consider the take-out inadvisable, although not positively wrong. In cases 5 and 6, in spite of the honours in Spades, I believe in bidding the Hearts.

To all rules there are exceptions. While with a strong

minor suit you should not deny your partner's major if you hold three cards of his suit, there are cases when you hold such a long string that you are justified in doing so.

Here is an example : Z, " One Spade " ; A, " No bid " ; Y holds :

(7) ♠—4, 3, 2 ; ♥—None ; ♦—K, Q, J, 10, 7, 6, 4, 3, 2 ; ♣—6.

Although this might be a game hand in Spades, it is conceivable that it might not be. At any rate, it is practically a certain game in Diamonds, and there is no fault to be found with the denial.

A point to notice in connection with the denial is that it must be made on the first round and without an intervening bid by an opponent. A bid made by a player who has previously passed his partner's initial major suit bid is not a denial, but an announcement of normal support for partner's suit plus outside strength in the new suit.

Thus if Z bids " One Spade " and A says " No bid," Y with normal help (i.e., three Spades) should not show a suit. But if Z bids " One Spade " and A " Two Clubs," and Y " Two Spades," and B " Three Clubs," and Z passes, then Y in his turn will be quite right to show another suit if his cards justify it. This bid should not be read by Z as a denial of the Spades, but as showing additional strength in Y's hand.

Taking Out a No Trump Bid

There is no question which gives rise to so much controversy—often acrimonious—as the take-out of a No Trumper. You cannot be in any card-room long without hearing someone say, " What on earth did you take me out for ? " or " Why did you not take me out, partner ? "

It is difficult to lay down hard and fast rules for the take-out. Some players hate being taken out at all. Others invite it. A bad take-out or an unlucky take-out may lose the game. Failure to take-out may likewise lose the game.

The point is that you never know what the No Trumper

consists of. It may have one weak spot, or it may have several weak spots. Take the three-Ace No Trumper, which most authorities agree is a correct bid. What a lot of filling in from partner it requires to make it a game hand at love score. Or take the good No Trumper with weakness in one suit only. How often do you find that Dummy is weak in that very same suit and that game could have been achieved only in a suit bid.

I submit two general principles which should govern the take-out. The first is for a hand that is of such a character that it looks a certainty in a suit bid, even though it is a good supporting hand for a No Trumper. There are hands in which it looks probable that you would do equally well in " No Trumps " or in a suit bid. But, if the hand has one or more weak spots, don't take the risk. Bid the suit that seems certain game. Your partner may be annoyed with you sometimes for adopting this course, and consider you a selfish player.

" What ? " he may ask. " You take me out when you have all that valuable support for ' No Trumps ' ? "

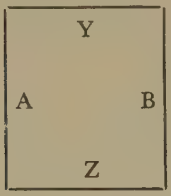
Never mind this criticism. Your object on a good hand is to go game. No one should ever find fault at being taken-out from strength. Remember that, *while a hand may be too bad to take-out a No Trumper, no hand is ever too good to do so.*

The second guiding principle is that you should take-out when your hand is of such a nature that it is likely to be of no use in " No Trumps." This is generally called the take-out from weakness. But I dislike the term, as it is begging the question. A hand that may be weak in itself may be of great strength when played in conjunction with a No Trumper. The point about this take-out is that you have not top honours in the suit you bid, or sufficient cards of certain re-entry to render the suit useful in " No Trumps." Six of a major suit, even although only 10 or 9 high, is always a good take-out. But I do not recommend a take-out into a minor on less than seven, and then only if it is *quite impossible* to be of service to the " No Trump " bidder.

Here is a hand that gave rise to great discussion. The

score was game all. Y dealt and called " One No Trump " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " Two Spades " ; A, " No bid " ; Y, " Two No Trumps " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " Three Spades." All passed.

♠—3
♥—A, K, Q, J
♦—K, 9, 6
♣—A, K, J, 5, 2



♠—9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 2
♥—2
♦—Q, J, 10, 8, 7, 4
♣—None.

The questions which arose were : (1) Ought Z to have called " Two Spades ? " (2) Ought Z to have called " Three Spades " after the " Two No Trumps ? " (3) Should Y have called " Three No Trumps ? "

My replies were : (1) Yes. (2) No. (3) No.

In my opinion Z was bound to bid " Two Spades," and Y was quite right on his hand to take it back to " Two No Trumps." The mistake Z made, however, was bidding his Spades again. On the second round he ought to have called " Three Diamonds," not " Three Spades."

Y says that in this case he would have called " Three No Trumps."

As the cards were distributed (A had quart major in Spades), Z could not get three Spades, nor could Y make " Three No Trumps." A B must make four Spades and

one Diamond. As a matter of fact, the only suit in which Y Z could make game was Diamonds. Without judging by results, I consider that, if Z had called three Diamonds, Y ought to have left it, in spite of his good hand. The hand illustrates the necessity of taking out.

With a two-suit hand, if your partner does not like your first take out, show him your second suit.

The great point to realise is that when your partner takes you out of a No Trumper into a suit it is a warning to you to discontinue your No Trumper. It says :

" Partner, I think I can do better in my suit call than in No Trumps. Therefore, unless you are very strong, leave me alone."

Remember that when your partner takes you out, whatever strength you have in your hand is bound to be useful to him, while his suit may be of little or no use to you if played in No Trumps.

Therefore be prepared to sacrifice the playing of your good hand for the sake of the partnership.

It is natural when you have a good No Trumper to wish to play the hand yourself. But don't let that consideration affect you, *unless you have certain game irrespective of your partner.*

The Pre-emptive Raise

While opinions differ as to the initial pre-emptive bid, I do not think there is any doubt at all about the pre-emptive raise. The pre-emptive raise is when you put up your partner without an intervening bid. Thus Z, " One Heart "; A, " No bid " ; Y, " Three Hearts." Or Z, " One Heart " ; A, " One Spade " ; Y, " Three Hearts." Both of these are pre-emptive raises on the part of Y, and show that he has considerable support for the Heart bid, wishes the game to be played in that suit, and probably desires also to shut out further bidding on the part of the opponents.

But why, you may say, be in such a hurry to support ? Why not wait and raise when and if necessary ? The answer is that if your hand is of a particular type your pre-emptive raise is either desirable or necessary.

Consider its advantages: (1) It assures your partner that he has made the right initial bid to fit your hand. (2) It either shuts out the fourth bidder or compels him to make a bigger bid than he may desire to make. (3) It frequently prevents communication between the opponents. And (4) it enables the Declarer to go on bidding with confidence if he has side strength in addition to his initial bid or to bring off a profitable business double.

Raising on a Yarborough

What are the types of hands on which a pre-emptive raise should be made?

Generally speaking, length in trumps and some outside strength. This "strength" may not consist of Aces and Kings, but may be a singleton in a suit or chicane in a suit.

Here is a rather unusual example from actual play of a perfectly sound put-up on a Yarborough. Score game all. Z dealt and bid "One Spade"; A, "Two Hearts"; Y held: ♠—9, 8, 7, 6, 4, 3, 2; ♥—None; ♦—None; ♣—8, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2.

Y rightly said "Four Spades," which closed the bidding. Z made five Spades, and A B, as it happened, could have made six Hearts, but the big pre-emptive raise frightened them off.

It should be noted here that Y's bareness in Hearts and Diamonds was just as valuable as if he had held Aces of these two suits—a fact not always realised by players who will put their partners up sky high when they hold court cards, but are very chary of supporting without "pictures." While the absence of a suit is a weakness rather than a strength for the Declarer, the exact opposite is the case for Dummy.

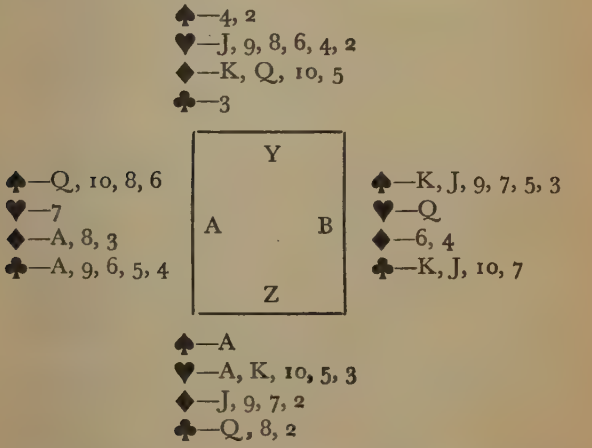
Applying this principle on hands not so freaky as that given, a pre-emptive raise of a major-suit bid should always be made when you hold (*a*) four cards of your partner's suit and two outside quick tricks, (*b*) five or more of your partner's suit and one outside quick trick, (*c*) four or five

of your partner's suit and shortness or bareness in the other major suit.

I claim for the pre-emptive raise that, properly used, it is a very effective weapon of offence, and one of the biggest game winners or game savers.

At the same time, discrimination is necessary. When your partner has made a bid and you have little more than average expectancy, it would be wrong to raise the bid. You would prefer to hear what the opponents can say.

With an all-round hand and only three of your partner's suit, I do not advocate a pre-emptive raise, even though you have four tricks or more in side suits. With only two of your partner's suit a pre-emptive raise should never be made, no matter how strong the rest of your hand. It is better to go into "No Trumps" rather than raise your partner's suit bid holding only two.



This distribution of cards from a hand which occurred in actual play was set at a tournament where the players

were given prearranged hands to see who could make the highest score.

At game all Z deals and bids " One Heart." A says " No bid." The result depends on the action of Y.

The best bid is four or five Hearts by Y.

At every table except one Y passed the initial " One Heart," B showed Spades, and the bidding was carried to five Spades against five Hearts. At one table B made his contract, losing one Heart and one Spade, as he was able to throw his losing Diamond on the long Clubs.

But this was due to bad play on the part of Z. After making his first trick in Hearts, Z should lead a Diamond. If he does that and pursues the suit when he gets in with his Ace of Spades, B must be one down on his contract.

However, at any table where " Five Spades " were called B was only one down on his contract, and saved game and rubber.

At one table only did Y bid " Five Hearts " straight away, B and Z passed, and A, on the strength of his two Aces, doubled, giving Z Y the highest score. Z made game and rubber, losing only one Club and one Diamond.

The point to notice about this hand is that, when once Z has mentioned Hearts, Y must be determined that the hands shall be played in that suit. It is therefore " up to him " *to pre-empt to the hilt* before B has a chance of speaking.

It is futile and silly for Y either to pass without saying a word or to make a feeble raise of two or three. Y should at once say " Four Hearts," if not five.

B is now in a difficult position. His hand does not justify in any way a four-Spade bid, although he suspects the adversaries of trying to shut him out.

No one but a speculative flag-flier would dream of bidding " Four Spades " on his hand.

If he does the bidding is not yet over, and Z, on his partner's pre-emptive raise, is justified in going to five Hearts.

Then comes A's problem. Should he raise to five Spades or double five Hearts ?

If he elects " Five Spades," Y must chance " Six Hearts " on his freak holding. But if A doubles five Hearts all is well for Y and Z.

An initial raise to five Hearts by Y undoubtedly would end the bidding. Not even the most confirmed flag-flier dare risk a bid of " Five Spades " against it, and if it is doubled by A, so much the better.

Raise Your Partner's No Trumper

Valuable as the pre-emptive raise is in a major suit bid, it is still more desirable and necessary when your partner bids " One No Trump." Here, with no intervening bid by second hand, I recommend the pre-emptive bid of " Two " or even " Three No Trumps " if your cards in any way justify it. It is one of the best bids that can be made, and it is not used nearly so often as it should be.

What generally happens is this : Z, " One No Trump," A and Y, " No bid " ; B, " Two Diamonds," Z and A, " No bid," Y, " Two No Trumps."

Y has a guard in Diamonds and some other strength. But the mischief has been done. A leads a Diamond, and Z, instead of going game—as he would have done if Diamonds had not been opened—makes only two by cards or the odd trick.

Whereas, if Y had only said " Two No Trumps " before B had the chance to bid, B would not have spoken, and Z would have made game.

This is one of the most common occurrences at the Bridge-table, and it is astounding to me that players will not learn the lesson and draw the moral.

The point is that, if you have a hand on which you will bid " Two No Trumps " if the adversaries made a bid, get in your bid at once to shut out, if possible, a lead-directing bid by fourth hand.

You know fourth hand will make a bid if he possibly can in order to show A what to lead. But there is all the difference in the world between making a bid of two and a bid

of three. A player fourth in hand will make a bid of two over "One No Trump" when he would not dream of making a bid of three after the No Trumper has been supported on first round, because he is "left guessing," as the Americans say, and fears a big double.

"But," I have heard it argued, "why should I make things more difficult for my partner? He may have called a very light No Trumper (players often do). Why should I, without a danger-signal from opponents, put him up to 'Two No Trumps' without knowing whether the hands fit?"

This may sound plausible, but really it misses the point entirely. In fact, I would go so far as to say that the lighter your partner's No Trumper, the more necessary for you to make a pre-emptive raise if your hand in any way justifies it.

Let us suppose your partner has made "One No Trump" on the barest minimum bid—say, three Aces and no outside strength. You hold this hand: ♠—9, 5, 2; ♥—Q, J, 4; ♦—K, Q; ♣—K, Q, J, 9, 7.

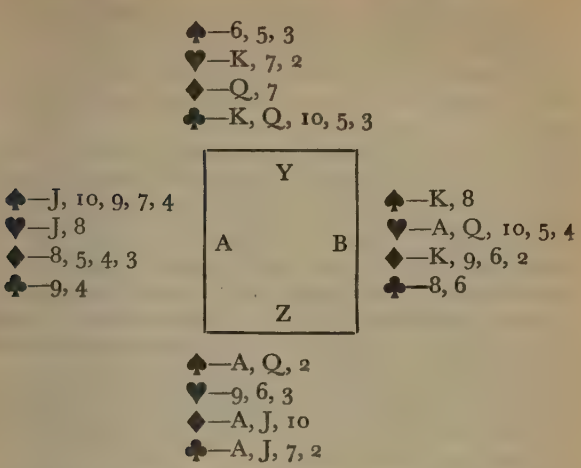
Put your partner up at once to "Two No Trumps." Why? Well, if fourth hand bids "Two Spades," and it comes round to you again, what can you do?

You can bid three Clubs; but, if you do that on second round, your partner, with only a single guard in Spades, may doubt your strength, and may not feel equal to bidding "Two No Trumps."

It is true that between you it may be possible to save the game in Spades, or even "set" the contract. But what is the use of that if you had a game-making hand in No Trumps?

Try this out for yourself, and if you have not already realised it you will be surprised at the results. It will not always work, because sometimes second hand will be lying low with a long suit, which he does not mention as it is his lead if the No Trumper is left in. But apart from these occasions you will find it, on the whole, a most paying proposition.

Here is a case from actual play of a No Trumper.



Score, game all. Z bids "One No Trump"; A, No bid"; Y, "Two No Trumps"; all pass.

A opens the Jack of Spades, and Z makes four "No Trumps." At the end of the game B says to Y: "Your bid of 'Two No Trumps' prevented me showing my Hearts."

Precisely. That is one of the great advantages of the pre-emptive raise. If Y had passed (as so many players do on this type of hand), B would have said, "Two Hearts." His hand justified it, and he must show it in order to indicate a lead to his partner.

Now if B is allowed to bid "Two Hearts," Z can neither double nor make a second bid. Y would probably bid "Three Clubs," and the bidding would be closed. At Clubs Y cannot go game.

If Y bids "Two No Trumps" over the "Two Hearts," B saves the game, as A leads a Heart.

You may say: "But B could not make two Hearts. He

must be down on his contract of two Hearts." Quite true, but he saves the game at small cost, as he is unlikely to be doubled. Secondly, he is unlikely to be left in with it, as Y is almost certain to bid " Three Clubs." Thirdly, even if Z or Y doubled, the penalty would not have been adequate to compensate for the game and rubber they could have won.

This example is interesting, because neither Z nor Y had individually overwhelming hands. I have seen numerous cases where Y was much stronger and yet has failed to make a pre-emptive raise, with the consequence that B has been able to " show a suit." This showing a suit by fourth hand often upsets a No Trumper. It nearly always turns out to the disadvantage of Z. Even when he or his partner is strong enough to continue the bidding, it results in the making of several tricks by the opponents which otherwise might not have been made.

The pre-emptive raise by Y turns out advantageously at least seven times out of ten. The occasion when it may not come off is when A is lying low with an unmentioned solid suit over the No Trumper.

It would be easy to give other examples where the making of the game depends entirely upon Y's pre-emptive raise.

Inferences in Re-bidding

Let me attempt to show how the process of deduction assists a player in re-bidding his hand when on the actual face value of the cards he does not appear to have a reasonable re-bid.

If you watch successful players, you will at times be amazed by their extraordinary second or third round bids. They will jump suddenly into a bid that, on the cards they hold, seems wild or foolish. But, lo and behold ! Dummy goes down, and the bid proves to be the best possible call for the joint hands.

" How amazingly lucky ! " you say.

But it is not really a matter of luck at all. It may be,

and generally is, a well-reasoned and logical deduction from the previous bidding.

Often it happens that in the bidding one hand is marked unmistakably as short or bare in a particular suit. The alert player immediately asks himself: "With what suit or suits is the hand filled out?"

To make the matter clear take this case: Z deals, and bids "One Spade," holding: ♠—A, Q, 7, 5, 2; ♥—J, 10, 9, 3; ♦—None; ♣—K, Q, 10, 8. A bids "Two Hearts"; Y, "Three Diamonds"; B, "No Bid." What can Z do? He hates the "Three Diamonds." But it is evident his partner does not like Spades, and therefore he must either pass or bid "Three No Trumps," which would be extremely risky. That is how the average player would argue. But now reason it out a little more closely. It is evident by Y's bid that: (1) He has not three Spades. He may have two, but it is quite likely that he has only one. (2) He cannot have many Hearts, as Z has four and A must have five at least. What, then, can Y have besides Diamonds? He must have Clubs, and it is quite likely that he holds four Clubs.

Arguing on such lines, Z bids "Four Clubs." This is denying the Diamonds, and it proves to be the only game-going declaration in the two hands.

This is no manufactured situation, but a hand from play where intelligent deduction proved a game-winner.

Don't, I pray and beseech you, get this wrong, and say that Manning Foster recommends a bid of "Four Clubs" on K, Q, 10, 8. Remember the context and the whole hand and the process of reasoning. Of course, you may say that Z's inferences might have been incorrect. Y might have had quite a different hand. Suppose he held eight Diamonds, one Spade, two Hearts, and only two little Clubs. Well, in that case, of course, he should have taken out the "Four Clubs" into "Four Diamonds." But that is not the right way to look at the matter. The correct process is to deduce from the bidding the probable and sometimes almost certain holding of your partner.

Take this example: Z, "One Heart"; A, "One Spade"; Y, "Three Hearts"; B, "Three Spades."

Z holds : ♠—8, 5, 4, 2 ; ♥—A, K, J, 6, 2 ; ♦—K, 3 ; ♣—A, 4. What can Z deduce ?

(1) It is practically certain that Y has no Spades at all. A and B must hold nine Spades between them, and, as Z has four, Y can have none. (2) By the pre-emptive raise Y must have at least four, and probably five, Hearts, which means that one of the adversaries is short or bare in the suit. (3) Supposing Y has no Spades and five Hearts, what are his other eight cards ? Obviously in Diamonds or Clubs. If he holds a winner in either suit, Z's game is certain. Z can therefore safely go to four Hearts, and even five, if four Spades are declared against him. Easy enough when it is set down in black and white, isn't it ? And yet I saw this actual case occur. Z failed to bid " Four Hearts " because, as he explained, " I held four losing Spades and therefore did not like to go on ! "

CHAPTER IV

Informatory Doubles

Oh, these American doubles ! What sighs, sorrows, doubts, qualms, and quarrels they cause ! Wherever you go you come across them. Your partners bludgeon you with them.

In the first place, nine out of ten of the ordinary players one meets use the doubles all wrong. They have got confused and distorted ideas on the matter. They double when they shouldn't, and they don't double when they should. Some of them double for the mere sport of the thing, without rhyme or reason, putting their unfortunate partners under the hammer all the time.

I thought by this time most regular players—club players, at any rate—would have learnt something about these doubles ; but, in spite of all that has been written about them, they don't appear to have done so. In fact, I consider doubling is wilder now than when first these conventions were introduced. As a rule, the weaker the player the more he loves the informatory doubles. As one player remarked to another : " Well, sir, if that is your idea of an *informatory* double, all I can say is that you ought to be—er —in a *reformatory*."

One of the prevalent illusions is that the informatory double *always must* be taken out. But that is not the case at all.

By this system it is true that, the worse your hand, the more necessary the " take-out." If you have " rags," you must take out. But if you are strong, and can see a substantial penalty, the best thing is to leave in the double.

This is most excellent advice, if only you can trust the doubler. Unfortunately, more often than not you can't. The consequence is that the double frequently results in

" forced " bids, which are all to the advantage of the bidder who has been doubled.

The true inwardness of the informatory double is to promote partnership and find out (by means of the double) the best declaration for the two hands. But does it succeed in this ? Very seldom, because most of the doubles are bad, and, when they are not bad, the result they achieve would have been arrived at without their aid at all.

This applies especially to the double of " One No Trump," which is the most abused of all the doubles. The doubler of " One No Trump " announces in the language of Bridge : " Partner, I have a No Trumper myself, but my opponent has forestalled me. I shall be glad to hear from you what you can do in the matter. Therefore, indicate your longest suit, or, if you please, bid ' Two No Trumps.' "

Theory, splendid ; but how often the execution is bad ! First the doubler often has not a No Trumper at all. He is dazzled by the appearance of a few high cards. He doubles. His partner takes him out into " Two Clubs " on four to the nine.

He has three to the Ace in Clubs, so he goes " Two No Trumps," is doubled (a business double this time), and down he goes.

Or suppose the double is a genuine one, and partner takes out. The result is often most disappointing. Instead of the hands being played in the best possible bid, they are often played in the worst. Why ?

Because the doubler seldom knows whether his partner's " take-out " is strong or weak. It may be either. If it is strong, he does not want to interfere with it, even if it does not fit his hand. If it is weak, he does not dare to.

The point I want to rub in is that, badly used, as they are in most cases, they are a most dangerous weapon. It is like children playing with a loaded gun. Properly used, they can be of great value. But the occasions on which they can be properly used are comparatively rare.

A point about these informatory doubles deserves mention. They inculcate and involve unselfishness and team work. They necessitate, as a rule, the player with

the stronger hand sacrificing himself to his partner with the weaker hand.

It is only human nature for the player with the better cards to wish to play the hand. But it is one of the paradoxes of Bridge that it is frequently more profitable for the *weaker* hand to play the cards.

I do not propose in this book to enter minutely into the whole complex system of American informatory doubles, because, as a matter of fact, the system has not been adopted in its entirety in this country.

Readers who are interested can find the whole system explained in various American text-books and in my *Baby Bridge Book*.

I confine myself, therefore, to the two chief doubles recognised in England.

The two doubles are the double of " One No Trump " and the suit double of one or two. These doubles, known as the Patton and Whitehead doubles, from the names of their inventors, have been played in the United States since 1911 and 1914 respectively. Now, while it is claimed that they add to the interest and amusement of the game, their invention was due to no such objects. They were devised as purely practical business ideas.

When the Americans take up a game they do so seriously. They are out to win somehow, and they are not, as a rule, concerned with the amateur who plays simply for pleasure.

The doubles were invented first to prevent the light " No Trump " bidder " getting away with the goods," making an easy contract, or escaping with light penalties.

In the old days, when Z made a bid of "One No Trump," A, sitting with a good hand on which he had a prospect of saving the game, or perhaps " downing " the contract, passed. The result was that Z made his one, or perhaps two, No Trumps, or was penalised 100 points.

This was not good enough for the Americans. To save the game or impose a trivial penalty when something better might accrue, or possibly game be won, was bad business. The double of " No Trumps " was devised as a remedy.

Similarly with the suit double. Z bids " One Spade." A

sits with a good No Trumper, but has no guard in Spades, and no suit long enough to bid. Formerly he sat tight and hoped for the best. Or he might risk a suit bid which might or might not fit his partner's hand. Now he doubles, and it sometimes comes off and sometimes does not. But of the two doubles I am convinced absolutely that the suit double is far and away better than the No Trump double. In my experience it succeeds in something like eight cases out of ten, when properly made. The No Trump double is much more of a gamble, and at love score I deprecate its use. As the tendency is to abandon the light No Trumper, the doubler takes upon himself a great responsibility, and, as used by most players over here, gets himself and his partner into difficulties when, if he had kept quiet, all would have been well.

Everything, however, depends upon how these doubles are employed. Two suggestions I offer :

(1) The double of " One No Trump " should be used only occasionally, and on special and rare types of hands and at a critical score.

(2) The suit double should be made only on considerable strength, and when the doubler is prepared to hear and support a major suit bid from partner, even if that suit be only four small cards.

The double is not, as they say in the marriage service, " to be enterprised nor taken in hand lightly or wantonly, but discreetly, advisedly, soberly."

The Double of " One No Trump "

Two positions arise : (1) When Z bids " One No Trump " and A doubles. (2) When Z bids " One No Trump," A and Y " No bid," and B doubles.

In the first position, A, according to American authorities, should have at least five high cards (by which is meant Aces, Kings, and Queens) to justify his double, and should have at least three cards of each major suit. The possession of three Aces is not sufficient for a double.

My own view is that at love score, or a non-dangerous

score, A, having the lead if the No Trumper is left in, should not double if he has the certain, or almost certain, saving of the game. Nor should he double because he has a certainty of defeating the contract. The proper double of " One No Trump " is, in my opinion, reserved for the rubber game, when Y Z are 20 or more up and A B are nothing.

Then A will rightly double the No Trumper to try to save the rubber, and he will be justified in doubling on even less than five high cards, so that the opponents may not get away with the game cheaply.

Personally, this is practically the only use of the double of " One No Trump " I favour.

The double on five high cards (and so many players double on less) is frequently a snare and a delusion. It is " asking for trouble." If Z has made a sound No Trumper (mark the " if ") and A is strong enough to double, it is unlikely B has a hand which will produce a game call.

Unlikely, but, of course, not impossible. But, as commonly played, the double results disastrously for the doubler and his partner.

Bad as the double of " One No Trump " frequently proves to be when made by A even on statutory strength, the double by B, after two passes, is even worse. Z bid " One No Trump," A and Y " No bid," B doubles.

What should he hold to justify such a bid ? He is sitting *under* the " No Trump " bidder. He cannot consider his Kings, as A can, as likely winners.

To double in such a position should mean that he has at least six tricks in his hand. But with such a holding the double is, as a rule, futile. He has three other courses open to him—to bid " Two No Trumps," to bid a suit, or to pass. To bid " Two No Trumps " when sitting under the original No Trumper is nearly always bad business. To bid a suit in this position as a directing lead is nearly always sound. To pass with six tricks is pusillanimous, and not to be recommended.

Unhesitatingly I recommend a suit bid in preference to a double. It may, and often does, result in getting the opponents out of their depth, while showing partner what

to lead. It can't do any harm, and may do great good, whereas the double in this position is more likely to do harm than good.

The Double of One or Two of a Suit

The suit double, while similar to the No Trump double in that it is designed to prevent the first bidder from getting away with a cheap contract, has several interesting aspects.

A position frequently arises when Z (dealer) bids a suit and A has a good hand, practically a No Trumper, but with no guard in the suit named.

Before the informatory double, A in this position must either pass, thereby being perhaps deprived of a game hand, or gamble a bid in a suit which might or might not fit his partner's cards, or risk a No Trumper and find his partner also without a guard in the suit originally bid.

The old method was for A, when he saw the certain or probable saving of the game, or even when he saw positive penalties, to sit tight and pass.

This was soon discovered to be not good enough. If you and your partner have a game hand between you, it is small consolation for you to have saved the game, or even to have " downed " your opponents by one, two, or even three tricks undoubled.

But whereas the No Trump double does announce to partner considerable strength distributed amongst at least three suits, the suit double has quite a contrary meaning.

It says, in the language of Bridge : " Partner, I am weak in the suit named, but I hold strength outside. Therefore, if you have the adverse suit doubly guarded, bid ' No Trumps ' ; otherwise bid your longest suit, giving preference to a major suit if possible."

This convention works out admirably in practice, always provided that the double is sound.

It frequently yields the most amazing results. Even the weakest take-outs, when the double is really sound, may succeed. The holder of the weaker hand, instead of being Dummy, becomes Declarer, and that alone is often a great advantage, as the value of his hand is not disclosed at once.

I am a great believer in the informatory suit double judiciously used.

Now what is the *minimum* strength which justifies the double of a suit bid of one?

There is considerable diversity of opinion among American authorities as to the exact amount necessary. But my own view is that Mr. Milton Work hits the nail on the head when he states that the most sound and simple answer is to impose the same general strength-requirement as obtains in doubling "One No Trump." In other words, the rule should be: Do not double a suit unless the three undoubled suits (any of which the doubler invites his partner to bid) all contain support for a partner's declaration of that suit and the hand contains a total of five high cards.

Such a double tells the partner that he can bid any one of three suits and be sure of a Dummy containing better than an Ace, a King, a Queen, and a Jack, and at least three trumps and at least one high honour in the trump suit.

It is desirable, if you double a major suit bid, that you should hold four cards of the other major suit, as naturally you desire your partner to take out into a major suit if he cannot bid "No Trumps." But this, although desirable, is not absolutely essential, provided you have three suits stopped and a hand containing better than average high cards.

Here are a few examples.

(1) Z, "One Heart"; A, holding ♠—K, 6, 4, 2; ♥—5, 3; ♦—A, K, 4, 3; ♣—A, K, 2, should double "One Heart."

(2) Z, "One Spade"; A, holding ♠—4, 2; ♥—Q, J, 8, 6; ♦—A, K, 2; ♣—A, Q, J, 5, should double "One Spade."

(3) Z, "One Club"; A, holding ♠—A, J, 10, 2; ♥—K, Q, 9; ♦—J, 8, 4, 2; ♣—7, 3, should double "One Club."

Without labouring the point, you will never be wrong in your double if you are prepared for a weak take-out from your partner which will not lead you into disaster. It may happen that you have a four-card suit which you might bid instead of doubling. Whether to bid this or not

must depend upon the composition of your hand. If it is of such a nature as to make it desirable to hear from your partner, you choose the double. But if you hold a four-card major headed by A, K, Q, the suit bid (especially if the other major has been called) is generally preferable to the double.

The Masked Double

While the double of a suit frequently implies that the doubler is short of, or bare in, the suit he doubles, it does not necessarily follow that this is always the case. A player may desire to double a suit bid in which he is strong

Of course, these occasions do not occur very frequently. If Z bids "One Spade" and A is strong in Spades, his natural course is to leave the Spade bid alone in the hope that the game will be played in Spades, or, if he is sufficiently strong outside, he will bid "No Trumps," with the likelihood that Spades will be led up to him.

It may happen, however, that A's hand is of such a character that it is preferable for him to hear from his partner rather than to bid "No Trumps" himself straightaway. This is the case when he holds a singleton or weak doubleton of a suit.

He then makes what is called the "masked double."

Thus Z bids "One Diamond." A holds: ♠—A, Q, 9, 2; ♥—A, K, 5, 4; ♦—K, J, 10, 2; ♣—3.

On the old English principle he would either pass or bid "One No Trump," risking finding a guard in Clubs in his partner's hand.

The masked double meets the situation. A, instead of risking the No Trumper or bidding a weak Spade or passing, doubles. B must then take out. It is obvious that it is impossible that B should hold a double guard in Diamonds which Z has called. B is compelled, therefore, to make a suit bid. If he is able to bid Spades or Hearts, Z is perfectly satisfied. But, if he bids "Two Clubs," A should take out into "Two No Trumps."

This masked double, properly used, is often most effective, and it appeals especially to English players who prefer to

double on suit strength rather than on weakness. I have seen it produce wonderful results, and transform comparatively weak hands into game-going propositions.

That is all very well, you may say, but if you double a suit sometimes on strength in it and sometimes on weakness, how is your unfortunate partner to know what you are doing? Surely you are committing that unpardonable Bridge crime of deceiving your partner? The answer is that, while you may be deceiving him temporarily, it does not really matter, as you can soon undeceive him. You do not place him in any real difficulty. So long as he acts according to convention over the double, you cannot get into serious trouble, and you may achieve positive good.

If you will work out the position by dealing a number of hands and watching results, you will see that this masked double has wonderful possibilities, and is better than taking the risk of a sporting No Trumper.

Informatory Re-double

A point about which American authorities disagree, and which has never been thrashed out properly here, is the informatory re-double. There are two situations when it arises: (1) When the partner of the player whose bid has been doubled likes the double; (2) When the double has been left in by third hand and the player whose bid has been doubled desires at any cost to force a bid from his partner.

As to the first case, Z has made a bid of "One No Trump" and A has doubled. Y is in the happy position of liking the double. He has more than average support for a No Trumper. He feels certain his partner will have no difficulty, if the contract is allowed to stand, in making at least two No Trumps, and probably more. He can, of course, pass, and await events. But this may not be advantageous. Or he can bid "Two No Trumps" at once, which on certain types of hand may be the best course. But, realising that his partner and he hold the master position, the re-double is often wisest.

The informatory re-double in this position is most

reassuring. It gives Z just the information he desires. It says: "Partner, I have excellent support for the No Trumper, and you need have no qualms in pursuing it, if it seems good. But if B or A get frisky, we have a good business double later."

The type of hand on which a re-double should be made is one where Y holds strength in the major suits, and is not seriously afraid of any bid A and B can make. Thus Z, "One No Trump"; A, "Double,"; Y, holding ♠—A, J, 5; ♥—K, Q, 8; ♦—10, 8, 7, 2; ♣—Q, 10, 3, should re-double in preference to bidding "Two No Trumps."

A further point about the re-double is that it relieves B of the obligation of taking out. When Z bids "One No Trump," and A doubles and Y re-doubles, B is not obliged by convention to take out the re-double. In fact, he should not do so unless he has at least a good five suit.

This may seem illogical. "If," you may say, "B is expected to take out a double, however weak he is, surely it is all the more necessary for him to take out a re-double to extricate his partner."

But if you argue out the matter you will see the reason why B should not step in. When Z bids "One No Trump," and A doubles, and Y and B say "No bid," the bidding is over unless Z re-opens it. A has no second chance of showing a suit. But when Y re-doubles the bidding is re-opened, and it is therefore up to A, when his turn comes, to make another bid if he cannot stand the re-double.

The re-double is, in fact, a very useful weapon. A finds himself sandwiched between two good hands, and any subsequent bid he or his partner may make is almost sure to lead them into disaster.

The re-double may be punishing, even against a sound double. Against a bad double it is always productive of big penalties.

It is, in my opinion, the most effective response to the double when the Declarer's partner holds a good hand.

The S.O.S. Re-double

Now we come to the case where the Declarer employs

the re-double in self-defence. Z, " One No Trump " ; A, " Double " ; Y, " No bid " ; B, " No bid." B has made the " business pass," showing he is perfectly satisfied with the double of " One No Trump," and expects substantial penalties if it is left in.

But this does not suit Z's book at all. He does not want the game played in No Trumps doubled. He wants a suit bid. His partner has not spoken on the first round, but he intends to force a bid from him, however weak it may be. So Z re-doubles.

Unless you understand this convention, you might be inclined to believe it showed Z's pleasure at being doubled. In effect, it means exactly the opposite. It is a S.O.S. signal.

It is a peremptory demand on partner to take out. It says : " Partner, I cannot stand this double. You must show me a suit of some kind."

This is, as a rule, Z's best defence when he has made a light No Trumper.

Thus, suppose Z has called on three bare Aces, A has doubled, and the double has been left in by Y and B, Z should employ the re-double to force a bid from Y. This may, of course, turn out badly for Z, but it is not likely to turn out so disastrously as the doubled " One No Trump." If Y has only a weak five suit, even if doubled, the penalties will be less than the double of " One No Trump."

Many English players are unaware of this use of the re-double. Of course, it must only be made under the conditions stated, and not if Y has made a bid.

If Z bids " One No Trump " ; A, " Double " ; Y, " Two Hearts " ; B, " Double " ; should Z then re-double, that is a business re-double, and does not demand further action on the part of Y. The object of the informatory re-double is to compel Y to speak when he has refused to do so on the first round.

English System of Informatory Doubles

As there is no standardised method of playing informatory doubles, I give briefly the procedure which obtains at the

Portland Club and most of the chief London clubs as stated by Lieut.-Colonel Walter Buller :

" (*a*) The player who doubles ' One No Trump ' or a suit call of ' One ' or—in the case where neither he nor his partner has previously bid—a suit call of ' Two,' does so *in the expectation that his partner will not permit his double to be left in.* If follows that, *from his point of view at the time of the double*, he does not desire to have the hand played in the particular bid which he has doubled.

" (*b*) The doubler's partner may consider that, notwithstanding the fact that he is expected to bid over the double, it is more advantageous not to do so. Before deciding on this course, he must give full weight to the fact that his partner did not anticipate being left in. His view of the doubler's hand should be based on the knowledge that he has been asked to bid, even though he may have nothing of value in his hand. It is therefore clear that his partner has a hand of considerable value ; moreover, it is obviously one on which he is prepared to bid over the take-out. In the case of a suit double, it should also be clear that the doubler has probably no guard in the suit he has doubled ; otherwise, with his strong hand, he would presumably have called No Trumps.

" When one of a suit has been doubled, obviously there can but seldom be a case where the double can, with advantage, be allowed to stand. On the other hand, it is equally obvious that from time to time cases will arise where it is clear that a double of ' One No Trump,' or an ' informatory ' double of ' Two ' of a suit, should be left in, nothwithstanding that this was not the doubler's intention.

" In all other cases a bid *must* be made by the doubler's partner, provided that the player on the doubler's left has not made a bid (other than a re-double) over the double.

" (*c*) If the doubler's partner has a hand of value, his course will be clear. If he has a hand of little or no value, he should name his longest suit. In such a case, if he has two suits of equal length and similar strength (or, rather, lack of strength), each consisting of four or more cards, he should name the suit of lower value, provided always

that if one of these suit is major and one minor he should name the major suit.

" (*d*) If the player on the left of the doubler makes a bid (other than a re-double) over the double, the doubler's partner is not expected to bid unless he has something of value in his hand. In determining his course of action in this case, he should have regard to the fact that he has received information that his partner has a good hand.

" (*e*) In the event of a re-double by the player on the doubler's left, the doubler's partner should understand that, no matter how bad his hand, the doubler still expects him to make a bid. In this case he should follow the course laid down at (*c*) above.

" (*f*) When a bid of ' Two ' of a suit is doubled *after* the doubler or his partner has made a bid, or when a bid of ' Two (or more) No Trumps ' is doubled, or when a bid of ' Three ' (or more) of a suit is doubled, the doubler's partner should understand that the double was made in the expectation that he would probably not bid over it. These doubles are not ' informatory.' They can best be described as ' business ' doubles."

To " Yarborough," of the *Sunday Times*, who, I believe, was the first writer in this country to advocate the adoption of the informatory double system at a time when authoritative opinion was rigidly against it, should be given the credit for trying first to simplify and anglicise it.

He advises players to disregard all the complicated rules competitively and contradictorily devised by American writers, and confine themselves to the three following simple rules :

(1) A double of " One " of a suit or of " One No Trump" is informatory ; whether the doubler or the doubler's partner has previously bid or not.

(2) A double of " Two " of a suit is informatory unless the doubler or doubler's partner has previously bid.

(3) A double of " Three " of a suit or of " Two No Trumps " is always a business double.

This is practically the procedure as followed at the Portland Club, although Colonel Buller has enlarged upon it.

It must be understood, however, that when writing of the procedure at the Portland and other clubs such procedure is not invariable. There is no absolute uniformity of practice, and some players at the Portland Club refuse to use the informatory doubles at all, while others regard a double of "Two" of a suit as informatory even when the doubler has previously made a bid.

Business Doubles

Informatory doubles now loom so large that I need say little about business doubles. There are, however, a few points to be noted in addition to those commented upon in the chapter on "Mathematics."

(1) At score of game all, do not take a double when you have certain game and rubber unless you are sure the double will be worth 300 points or more.

(2) At any game score do not make a non-free double, that is when fulfilment of the contract undoubled would not give game to the opponents, unless you have a certainty in your own hand. Doubles of two or three of a major suit at love score are always dangerous, especially when your partner has not spoken initially or has made a forced bid on second round. For the sake of an extra 50 or 100 points don't jeopardise the game. If you have any doubt about a non-free double don't double.

Doubling, after all, is only an incident. The real object is to win games and rubbers. But I know certain players who appear to take no interest at all in a small rubber won without doubles. Their whole delight in Bridge is to bring off doubles.

For this purpose they lie low or miscall their hands. They revel in big figures.

Now, I am all in favour of the flagrant and rash bidder being penalised. But I find in these persistent doubling fiends a lack of discrimination. Their doubles mature from time to time. But on numerous occasions they come "unstuck" owing to bad judgment or a freakish distribution of the cards. In my time I have suffered severely from the

player who prefers a risky double to certain game, or insists on doubling merely because it is "free," or the contract is high.

There are people who double "on principle," they say—but what principle I have yet to learn—every contract of four or over, even on the most meagre material.

I am going to advance a proposition. I don't say it is new, but I have never yet seen it stated in a book. The proposition is that against good, sound opponents the double of a high contract is generally the most dangerous double of all.

This may sound paradoxical, but if you argue it out you will see that it is common sense.

If a player who knows what he is about bids "Five Hearts," for instance, over a bid of "Four Spades," it is almost certain that he has a freak hand. If he bids "Five Hearts" over "Four No Trumps" it is still more certain that the card distribution is abnormal.

Freak hands upset every theory and rule of the game. To take an extreme instance, you might hold all four Aces and yet an opponent might be able to make five by cards in a suit. I have seen it done. And yet a double with four Aces over a five-suit bid must, as a rule, be good, and nine times out of ten will yield penalties.

A statement that I have seen in more than one text-book is that when the contract is high (i.e. four or more) you can double on your outside cards, even if you are bare in trumps. This I regard as a fallacy. Against a sound Declarer it is most dangerous to double without trumps.

Business Re-Double

Amongst experienced players a business re-double is a rarity. I am not sure that it might not be abolished altogether without injury to the game. I have played for months on end and never heard a re-double. The reason is that the occasions on which a player can safely re-double are almost always those on which it pays him to keep quiet. A re-double on a positive certainty usually tells against the re-doubler, because it warns the opponents of their mistake and goads

them into further bidding, which is probably the last thing the re-doubler desires.

This is particularly the case in high bidding where the call has got up to four or five of the suit in Spades and Hearts. You have, let us suppose, a good thing in your bid of "Five Hearts." You are doubled, and you re-double. Your adversaries immediately switch into "Five Spades," which it is unlikely you can double effectively. Or perhaps you or your partner double "Five Spades" and get them down 100 or 200 points. You have gained nothing. Your "Five Hearts" doubled would have brought you 80 below the line, 50 above for contract, your honours, score, and game. You have exchanged the substance for the shadow.

In the early days of Auction Bridge the bluff re-double was fairly common. You re-doubled on your doubtful hand with the express purpose of frightening your opponents back into their suit, which you wanted to double. But it is a dangerous business to try this on in any card-room now, unless you are playing against duffers. The ruse is too transparent as a rule, and the re-doubler has very little chance of a successful coup.

There are occasions when a re-double is justifiable :

(1) When you have a practical certainty of fulfilling your contract, and at the same time an absolute certainty that if your opponents continue the bidding you can double them and fine them heavily—at least 300 points.

This case may arise when you have a strong "No Trump" hand, and are prepared to double a high bid of any suit, but it does not often happen.

(2) When you have a weak and nervous partner who, if you are doubled, is likely to be terrified and branch into some fresh suit to your detriment. If you re-double before he has a chance it will have the effect of calming him and keeping him quiet. This is the psychological re-double, and it is sometimes *very necessary*.

Psychology also plays its part in certain rare hands which make it practically safe to re-double. There are occasions when, from the freaky nature of your hand, you can be sure that your opponents will think they have such a good thing in the re-double that they will let it stand. The best

case I know is the following. A dealt and called "One Spade"; Y and B passed; and Z bid "Three Hearts." A and Y passed; and B called "Three Spades"; and Z "Four Hearts." A then called "Four Spades"; Y and B passed; Z called "Five Hearts" and A doubled. Y and B passed; and Z re-doubled. All passed.

Z's hand was: ♠—A; ♥—Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 6, 4, 3; ♦—None; ♣—A, K, J, 10.

Now, Z had not a certainty, but he had nearly a certainty. He asked his partner for one trick only, and that his partner supplied in the Queen of Clubs—his one and only trick. A, who had doubled, held Ace, King of Hearts, and Ace, King of Diamonds, and felt perfectly safe in the re-double. Z allowed for the psychological effect of the missing Ace and King of Hearts, probably in his opponents' hands, and also their strength in Diamonds, and was correct in his calculations. On the other hand, if Z had held the Ace, King of Hearts himself, and not two outside Aces, he should have kept quiet and not re-doubled.

CHAPTER V

Flag-Flying

When Over-calling is Justifiable and When it is Not

The subject bristles with difficulties because many elements come in. Psychology plays its part—the character and personal idiosyncrasies of one's partner and opponents. The state of the score and the general tenor of the game have to be taken into consideration.

There are some players who believe that wilful over-bidding should never in any circumstances be undertaken. They argue that it does not pay on balance. With the weight of the cards manifestly against you, submit quietly. Lose the rubber and start afresh.

With this view I do not agree. First of all, it is not in human nature in the rubber game at a critical score to allow your opponents to have an easy journey, when by over-bidding you may push them beyond the mark or be penalised yourself comparatively lightly.

Further, it is a sound proposition mathematically to over-bid to save the rubber, provided always it is done with discretion.

Those players who will never take a risk may acquire a reputation for soundness. They may never lose big rubbers. But, on the other hand, they seldom win big rubbers. Nor do they remember the numerous rubbers which, with a little more enterprise, they might have saved. The bold player is often blamed unjustly. The occasions when he goes down bite into the memory and are brought up against him. But it is seldom recognised that there is method in his madness, and that his persistence in his course, in spite of the manifest hostility of his partners, is based upon the observation that bold bidding does pay, and that judicious flag-flying is worth while.

Now, I suppose that, having written this, I shall be represented, or rather misrepresented, as advocating wild bidding. That is one of the many dangers in writing about justifiable over-bidding : someone is sure to misunderstand you and repeat your theories all wrong. But I must be content to take the risk and to give it as my considered opinion, after long experience at the card-table, that there is such a thing as justifiable over-bidding and that it pays on balance.

You will see that all turns on that word *justifiable*, because the principles I am going to enunciate give no countenance to the wild and reckless bidder who always overcalls his hand at all seasons, because of his temperament, or because he selfishly desires to play the cards.

The first principle I would lay down is :

Never take a risk that is not worth while.

This may sound so elementary and obvious as hardly to be worth mentioning. But in actual practice it is not. Every day one notices players who apparently have never realised the principle. They go down cheerfully in the first game of the rubber on hands on which they never had a possibility of making game.

I refer particularly to players who will keep on bidding a minor suit against a major. They go on up to four. They have no probability of making their contract. But yet they deliberately overbid their hands on the remote possibility of forcing up the adversaries. The consequence is they go down several hundreds when the game was not in danger. Or, even if the game was in danger, it was the first game and not worth saving at the cost of several hundred points.

I do not think there is any situation at Bridge more aggravating than to lose 300 or 400 points in the first game. You start handicapped, and with a handicap of your own or your partner's making. I have seen it stated that it is worth while to save the first game at a cost of 200 points, since the side winning the first game has a three to one chance of winning the rubber. But personally I don't believe in over-bidding to save the first game. That is the way to lose big rubbers.

The first game having gone, the necessity for flag-flying

tactics entirely disappears. That is the time to go warily and not be fined. If you lose a rubber in two or three hands, it is seldom very big. But if, because your opponents are a game in, you start overbidding, you are asking for trouble, and generally get it.

With a game against you and yourself at love, if you can catch the opponents, do so and fine them even at the sacrifice of a game for yourself.

So many players, when they are a game down, think it is a good plan to *equalise* matters, as they put it, and make it game all.

But this is quite wrong. When there is a game against you, go for penalties. You will then have an insurance against whatever happens. Suppose you can make "Three No Trumps," but your adversaries have called "Four Hearts." You can make "Four No Trumps," but a double brings you 300 or 400. That is better business than making the score game all and taking 40 below the line.

Deliberate overbidding with the intention of saving the game or rubber is justifiable only when you do not pay more for the privilege than it is worth.

It is in the rubber game, when each side has won a game, that the tussle begins, and that over-bidding tempered by judgment is justifiable.

Now, having expressed my approval of what I describe as justifiable over-bidding at certain critical positions of the game, I feel I should emphasise the dangers of promiscuous flag-flying.

Most of us are tempted to over-call especially when we are drawn with "sticky" and backward partners who in our opinion habitually under-call. There is another aspect. A "forward" player who knows that he has a reputation for flag-flying is conscious that his partners are afraid to support him, and will not always do so when they legitimately can, because they dread him going too far.

This knowledge, so far from checking him, makes him still more inclined to be reckless.

Having once discovered that his partner could have supported and wouldn't, he takes matters into his own hand, and when, as sometimes happens, he brings off a

coup, he becomes more confirmed than ever in his methods.

The problem of how to deal with this style of player is by no means easy, but I am convinced the best method is to allow for his psychology.

It is of no use at all refusing to support him when you can. That only makes him worse. The best plan is to support him up to the hilt whenever you can reasonably do so. It is the lesser of two evils, because he over-calls less when he is playing with a partner who will support him than he does when playing with a partner who, he knows, distrusts him. This may seem on the surface unsound, but I am convinced that it is good advice.

Flag-flying is so much a matter of temperament that no counsels of perfection are likely to have the slightest effect on those who are addicted to it. Like drink or drug-taking, the lust for keeping the game alive at almost any cost is a habit that grows upon a player. He can't help it, and there is an end of it.

But to the more sober and sane flag-fliers who calculate risks I would offer this advice. Don't over-bid your hand with no possibility of making game, nor possibility of saving game. The angle is all against such bidding. Why take a chance of losing several hundred points to prevent your opponents from making a score less than game, or, if they allow you to hold the bid, to make a score less than game yourself? Intelligent over-bidding always has two objectives, either to make game with a fair distribution, or to save game if over-bid.

Then as to facts and figures. The chief danger about over-bidding to save the rubber is that usually it is impossible to estimate your losses with anything like exactitude. As Mr. Milton Work wrote: "It is mathematically a sound gambit to lose 300 rather than to permit the opponents to win the rubber, but it is a dangerous chance. It may be that the other side will not go game—in which case it is throwing hundreds away.

"Even if the adversaries' game be sure, it is easy to over-estimate trick-making ability, and the disaster may be greater than is anticipated.

"Flag-flying with the expectation of 100 loss often results in a much larger score for the opponents. Deliberately offered, a 300 gambit is proportionately dangerous."

As an example of unsound flag-flying tactics, take the following: Score game all. Z deals and bids "One No Trump"; A, "No bid"; Y, "Two Hearts"; B and Z, "No bid." A, holding ♠—K, 10, 3; ♥—10; ♦—A, 8, 4; ♣—K, 9, 8, 6, 5, 2, bids "Three Clubs"; Y and B, "No bid"; Z, "Double." All pass. A loses 400 points on his flag-flying bid.

Now this is the sort of thing one sees constantly. Analyse the position. A, on his cards and the bidding, had a very good chance of making three tricks against the Heart declaration, viz. King of Spades, Ace of Diamonds, and King of Clubs. Supposing his partner held one trick, that meant saving the game. Instead of being content with this probable chance, he chose to call his Clubs. What could he expect?

If he finds his partner trickless, he must go down enormously. If he finds his partner with one or two or even three tricks, then at best he could hope only to make his contract or be 100 or 200 down. In any case his bid must be useless.

As the cards lay, Y could have made three Hearts only, as B held a trick in the suit.

A should have known that he had no chance of game, or even contract, whereas he had a chance of saving the game. There was nothing to gain by the bid, and a great deal to lose. It was, in fact, a senseless bid and deserved the punishment it got. *When taking risks, take them for something that is worth while if they come off.*

A very common fallacy is that it is good business to try to put your opponents up in order to get them out of their depth and double them. With this end a player will make a false call to entice the adversaries to bid up.

Now, this is all very well when it succeeds. It sometimes comes off against "rabbits," but seldom against experienced players, and, taking it all round, the risk is not worth while.

Usually it results in the biter being bitten. Instead of getting the adversaries up, the player is doubled and

cannot extricate himself. Or frequently it happens that his partner, not realising his ruse, puts him up or takes him out.

Here is a case in point. At score game all, Y Z 16 in rubber game, Z dealt and bid "Two Hearts." A held ♠—9, 2 ; ♥—J, 10, 6, 5, 3 ; ♦—A, K, 5 ; ♣—A, 6, 4. A, being one of those clever players who are always trying risky dodges, bid "Two Spades." His idea was that if he could get his opponents up to "Three Hearts," he would be able to double, but he did not feel like doubling two.

But, alas, his ruse did not succeed owing to his partner's interference. Y said "No bid" ; and B, holding ♠—K, J, 6, 3 ; ♥—None ; ♦—J, 6, 4, 2 ; ♣—K, J, 8, 7, 3, promptly called "Three Spades." He had his eye on the score, and was justified in his raise. The "Three Spade" bid was doubled, and A shifted to "Three No Trumps," which was also doubled. The adversaries did not, as A hoped, clear the Hearts for him, but attacked in Spades. A lost 300 points through his initial flag-flying bid. If he had been content to leave the "Two Hearts" alone without monkey tricks, he would have got Z one down.

Don't Over-bid Your Hand because you have a Singleton of the Adversary's Suit

One of the strangest delusions is that a singleton of, or chicane in, a suit increases the value of Declarer's hand.

This fallacy is held not only by beginners, but by experienced players who ought to know better. How often does one hear the remark, "I had to go on, partner, because I had only a singleton of the opponents' suit!"

There seems to be a muddle-headed idea that because you can ruff a suit on the first or second round, that it adds in some mysterious way to the value of your trumps.

Now, of course it is true that when you hold none or only one of a suit declared by your opponents, the deduction is that they hold a large number of that particular suit, and therefore you want to prevent them playing the game in their call if you possibly can. That is quite reasonable and right. But the fallacy lies in supposing that your

weakness in their suit adds to the value of your hand, and that you can " stretch " the bidding on this account.

To make my meaning perfectly clear, let us suppose you hold six Hearts to the A, K, Q, and no other cards of value. That hand is worth probably five tricks, possibly six tricks if Hearts are trumps. But its value is not increased because you have only one Spade or no Spades. If Hearts are not trumps your hand may be worth two tricks in defence, or possibly only one. But because your opponents bid Spades, of which you have a singleton, your hand is no more valuable than if you held three or four little Spades. Thus you hold : ♠—3 ; ♥—A, K, Q, 7, 5, 2 ; ♦—9, 7, 4 ; ♣—J, 5, 3. Your hand is worth probably five tricks if Hearts are trumps. Now alter it a little. You hold : ♠—9, 6, 3 ; ♥—A, K, Q, 7, 5, 2 ; ♦—9, 7 ; ♣—J, 5. Your hand is still of the same value. The fact that you hold three Spades instead of one makes it neither better nor worse.

Or take this case. You hold : ♥—A, K, Q, J, 10, 9. Your hand is worth a certain six tricks if Hearts are trumps. But it is worth no more because you have a singleton Spade or are bare in the suit. You cannot make your trumps twice over. And yet you will find many players constantly over-rating and over-bidding their hands just because they can get an early ruff.

So far from a singleton or chicane being a strength to Declarer, it is more often than not a weakness that may destroy the value of his hand. This is particularly the case where the Declarer has five, or even six, of his trump suit and a side suit which he wishes to establish. Forcing him to trump may entirely spoil his game.

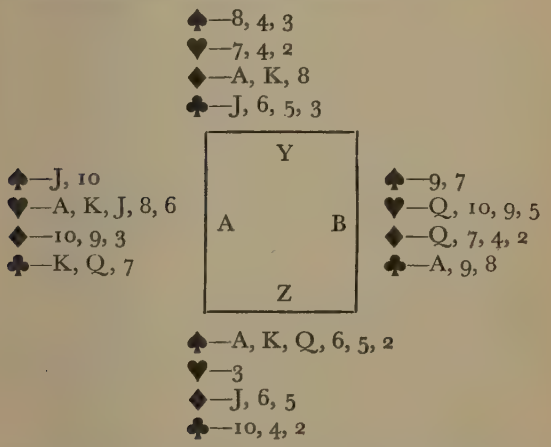
Here is an example : Z held ♠—None ; ♥—A, K, 10, 7, 5, 3 ; ♦—8 ; ♣—K, Q, 10, 9, 8, 4 ; and bid up to " Five Hearts " against " Four Spades." He was doubled, and lost 400 points.

Unlucky, you may say, for his hand was a two suiter of undoubted potential strength if his Dummy had fitted. The idea was, of course, that he would trump the first Spade led, clear Hearts, and establish his Clubs. But when Spades were led he had to part with a trump at once. This reduced his trumps to five, and, finding four to the Q,

J against him, and A, J, x of Clubs over him, he was "in the soup." Undoubtedly he was influenced psychologically in the valuation of his hand by the fact that he had no Spades. That fact, I agree, may have reasonably induced him to go on in order to save the game or the rubber. But it was no excuse for his over-rating the value of his hand without support from his partner.

The mistake arises from counting small trumps as worth more than their average value simply because one can make them early in play. Six trumps headed by A, K will on average make five tricks, but they will not make more because you can trump your opponents' suit on the first or second round.

To illustrate, I give another example :



Score : love all. Z deals, and bids "One Spade" ; A, "Two Hearts" ; Y, "No bid" ; B, "Three Hearts" ; Z, "Three Spades." All pass.

The interesting point about this hand, where Z holds six trumps and a singleton Heart, is to see what influence this singleton has on the result. Doubtless the possession of the singleton had an effect upon Z's bidding and caused him to

over-value his hand. You will see that, as the cards lie, Z's hand is worth six tricks—no more. A led two rounds of Hearts, Z trumping the second and exhausting the adversaries' trumps in two rounds. Now he starts Clubs, hoping to make the fourth if that suit was spilt. But it does not matter how he plays, he is bound, if the adversaries play properly, to be one down on his contract, losing a Heart, a Diamond, and three Clubs.

What influence on the result had the singleton, or Z's ability to ruff Hearts on the second round? You will see that it had none at all. Change Z's hand a little and give him two Hearts, so that he cannot ruff the suit until the third round, and take away one of his Clubs, exchanging with A. Now he loses two *Hearts*, but only two Clubs and one Diamond, and the result is the same, which shows that the early ruff had nothing to do with it.

Or change the hand again and give Z three Hearts, so that he cannot ruff the suit at all, and let him hold only two cards in Diamonds and two in Clubs. He still makes only two by cards, as he loses no Diamond trick, but must lose three Hearts and two Clubs.

It is obvious, therefore, that the singleton made no difference at all to the value of Z's hand.

The great point is that Z could not hope to make his contract of " Three Spades " unless he finds three tricks in Dummy.

The case is, of course, quite different when the singleton is in Dummy's hand. Then it is a most valuable asset. Supposing Z has bid " One Spade " and A " Two Hearts," and Y holds: ♠—9, 6, 3; ♥—5; ♦—A, K, 6, 4, 2; ♣—J, 9, 8, 5. Here the fact of the singleton in Y's hand is as good as if he held the King of Hearts, because on the second round of Hearts he can ruff with his smallest trump.

This is a matter insufficiently appreciated in bidding. When your partner has made a bid and been over-bid, and you have a singleton or none of the opponents' suit, you are in a strong position to support him if you have three or more small trumps, even though your hand may not be otherwise strong. In fact, you might have a Yarborough, and yet have excellent support for your partner because of your shortage in two suits.

PART TWO

THE PLAY

CHAPTER I

Declarer's Play

Inferences and Counting the Hands

"The dividing line," wrote an American authority, "between the mediocre Bridge-player and the real expert is that the one plays from trick to trick and lets things develop gradually, while the other infers from the first few tricks what is going to be the outcome, by his ability to place suits and cards that are not yet played."

Bridge is an easier game than Whist because of the bidding and the Dummy hand. At Whist the player can only form inferences and deductions from the fall of the cards. He starts in the dark. But at Bridge, when there has been brisk bidding, the final Declarer has a good general knowledge of how the cards are situated before the first lead.

As soon as Dummy is exposed he begins counting the hands. After a few tricks he can often "place" the cards with absolute accuracy. This feat, while it looks like legerdemain to the novice, is not really mysterious or marvellous. It is a habit easy to acquire with practice.

It is related of Mr. S. Lenz, one of the most expert Bridge-players in the United States, that he was taking part in a game where there had been only one bid. After the first lead by his partner and the exposure of Dummy, he offered to bet the Declarer that he could name eleven out of the twelve cards remaining in his hand. He not only did this, but managed to guess the twelfth one.

This may sound incredible, but it is a fact. The reading of the Declarer's cards was a logical deduction from examination of his own and Dummy's hands, coupled with inferences from his partner's initial blind lead.

While most players make some sort of general inferences from the bidding, very few have the capacity to work out swiftly in detail the information that is afforded to them. Of course, it is true that inferences from the bidding may not always be correct. You may think you can place for *certain* a particular card in a particular hand, only to find you are wrong. That is the fortune of war. But the point is that it is better to have made an inference, even if it turns out wrong, than to start off playing without having made any inference at all. It is possible to develop the art of inference and deduction to a very high degree, so that you may actually *know*, for instance, not guess, that the Ace of a suit lies in a certain hand.

How can you cultivate the art of inference? I will try to show you the simplest possible way.

At love score, Z deals, and bids "One Club." What can you reasonably deduce?

(1) That he has not a major suit which he can bid—probably he has not five cards of either major suit. This, of course, is not certain, but it is probable.

(2) That he has probably not three Aces, and certainly not four.

(3) That he has strength, but not necessarily length, in Clubs.

(4) That he has *certainly* at least two quick tricks in his hand. He may have more, but he cannot have less.

Now, here you have four solid inferences which are bound to help you in subsequent bidding, and also in the play of the hand if you apply them intelligently.

Similar inferences are to be gleaned from an initial bid of one, two, or three of a major suit. The original bid of "One No Trump" is the most baffling of all, in that so often it is difficult or impossible to deduce on what strength it is made.

Some of the most successful No Trumpers are called on two-suit strength, and it by no means follows that a big suit bid against a No Trumper may not be successful.

Knowing the hazard of the No Trumper—"Anything may happen to a No Trumper"—it is a recognised rule amongst good players that a major suit (even on four) is preferable to a light No Trumper. It is, therefore, as a rule, a safe inference when "No Trumps" is called that the bidder has not a sound major suit bid. "No Trumps" more often than not means long minor suits with guards in the major suits. It does not follow that every suit is guarded.

A first bid of "Two No Trumps" straight away, while it often scares opponents from bidding, is not to be read as cast iron. In fact, the bidding of two, rather than one, is as a rule a confession of weakness, showing that the bidder is afraid of a suit and does not want it mentioned or opened. Sound Two No Trumpers are made on long minor suits when a bid of a major is feared.

From every initial bid it is possible to form valuable inferences, not only as to how the cards lie, but as to the number of a suit in a given hand.

The method of applying this in actual practice is interesting. Take this example: Z deals, and bids "One Spade"; A, "One No Trump; Y and B, "No bid; Z, "Two Diamonds"; A and Y, "No bid"; B, "Two No Trumps." All pass.

A has now to play the hands in "Two No Trumps." B is exposed and Y had to lead. As soon as Dummy's cards are placed on the table, A can go a long way in counting the cards. Z must hold five Spades and at least five Diamonds. That accounts for ten cards in his hand. He has, therefore, only three cards in the other two suits, either two Hearts and one Club or one Heart and two Clubs, or, if he has six Diamonds, then only one Club and one Heart.

You may say it is not certain that Z has five Spades. He may have called on four. But if A has a guard and a high honour he can be certain that Z has not called on four. A holds, let us suppose, A, J, 10 of Spades. It therefore follows that Z has called originally on five to the K, Q, with an

outside quick trick which is almost certainly in Diamonds. Further, he could not have called "Two Diamonds" on second round on less than five, and he may hold six.

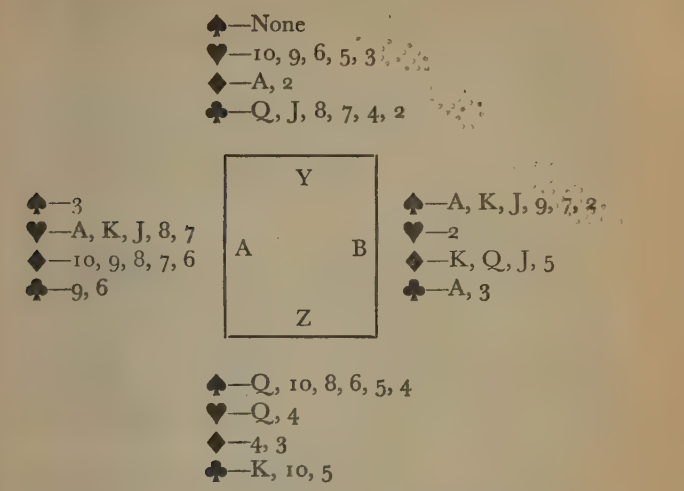
That is simple enough. But just see how the application of it helps the Declarer in the play of the hands. After a few tricks he should be able to know the exact location of the cards.

Of course, where there is only one bid it is not always possible to make many deductions, but where the bidding has been spirited an intelligent use of inferences will often produce results which to the uninitiated seem miraculous. While certain deductions may be made infallibly from the initial bids by sound players, caution must be observed in making inferences from second-round or later bids. While these often enable one to count the cards and determine length, they are not reliable guides in the matter of strength. You may think So-and-So holds the Ace because he has bid three of the suit on second round, and you may reckon, sitting over him, that your guarded King is a trick, only to find later that his partner holds the Ace, and your King is "dead mutton." But do not let incidents like that discourage you from making your deductions. Start counting the cards from the bidding.

Occasionally you find a player making what appears on the face of it an absolutely unjustifiable or outrageous bid. But, lo and behold! Dummy comes to the rescue. The cards "fit," and it proves to be the one and only successful declaration for the joint hands. Perhaps you are apt to exclaim at the player's luck in finding just the right supporting cards in Dummy, and you may even be inclined to remark, "Suppose those cards had been against you!"

Now, undoubtedly, some of these lucky bids are mere flukes. A player makes them on chance, and when they come off he thinks he has been clever. But there are other occasions, after brisk bidding, when a good and observant player will be able to branch into a call, otherwise impossible, with every prospect of success.

Here is a case in point. Score : game all. A B 20 in rubber game.



A dealt, and called "One Heart"; Y, "No bid"; B, "One Spade"; Z, "No bid"; A, "Two Hearts"; Y, "Three Clubs"; B, "Three Spades"; Z, "Double"; A, "Four Diamonds." All pass.

A got his contract, giving him game and rubber. But his bid was criticised by his opponent as a "pure gamble."

"Well," he replied, "I figured it out like this. My partner could not stand my Hearts at any price. I could not stand his Spades, which were doubled. As he was able to go up to 'Three Spades' in his own hand, the probability was that he had outside strength. As Clubs were called against us, I therefore argued that my partner had strength in Diamonds."

A's reasoning was sound, and his bid was justified, not merely by results, but because it had its origin in sound deduction.

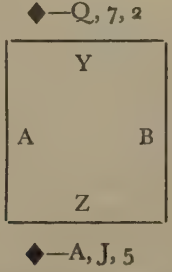
Some General Hints

Play to the score.—Every player should know and should keep the score. Again and again one hears the remark, "Oh, I did not realise the score. I thought we wanted three tricks for game."

When you are in a position to win the game, take no risk which involves the possibility of losing it. If you are 20 up and are left in with a "No Trump" bid, make the trick that wins the game as soon as possible, and don't try any "fancy" business to make a higher score until you have first won the game.

Forcing the lead.—Suppose you hold A, J of a suit, and your right hand adversary is marked with Q, 10. If he leads, you make both tricks. If you have to lead, you lose one. At the eleventh trick try to put him in so that he is compelled to lead the suit to you. The eleventh trick in the game has been described as the "pivot" trick, because on it often hangs the issue between making game or contract and just losing it. Throw the lead when there are exactly three cards in your hand. To do it sooner is no good, as your adversaries will put you in again.

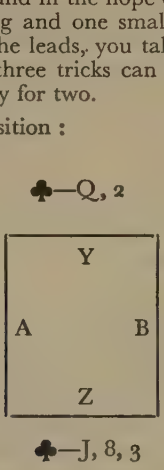
How to make an extra trick.—Suppose you hold six cards of a suit—three to the Queen in Dummy and three to the A, J in your own hand.



Your best way to play this combination is to lead the 2 from Dummy and finesse the Jack. You should not lead

the Queen, as, if you do, you are certainly making a trick good for the opponents. Now suppose your Jack wins the first trick, the King is marked with B. You should now stop the suit entirely, play your other suits, and keep a loser until the eleventh round in the hope of putting B in. B will then be holding King and one small Diamond. He must lead, and, whatever he leads, you take both tricks. This is an example of how three tricks can be made from a suit which looks good only for two.

Here is another position :

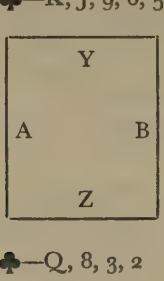


With a holding such as above you should avoid leading the suit yourself. If led by you it is probable that you will not make a single trick in it. But if the adversaries lead the suit you will make a trick on the third round. When the suit is led by your adversaries, the hand containing the honour and one small card should never play the honour second in hand.

Watch opponents' discards.—When playing out a long suit at "No Trumps" watch carefully what your opponents discard. You can often glean information as to where to finesse with a probability of success.

Manipulation of honours.—When holding a suit distributed between your own and Dummy's hand—five in one and

four in the other—play an honour from the hand which contains two honours, on the first round, thus :



You do not know the position of A, 10, 7, 4. If they are divided between A and B two and two, or even three and one, it does not matter much how you lead to clear the suit. But suppose they are all in one hand. Then if you lead the Queen first from Z, and B holds all four, B must make two tricks in the suit. But if you lead the small Club from your hand and put up Jack, B will only make one trick—the Ace—as you are in a position to finesse against him later.

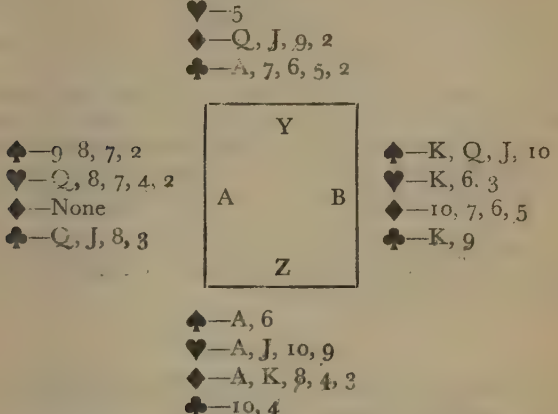
Similarly with A, K, and Q distributed between the two hands ; lead an honour from the hand containing two honours, on the first round, to prevent the Jack making.

When to Go for a Cross Ruff

The necessity to lead out trumps is so firmly impressed on players that often they fail to recognise the occasions when it is fatal voluntarily to have even a single round of trumps. Hands occur when the only chance of game depends upon cross ruffing. It is necessary to size up the

position at the very first trick, as otherwise the opponents may take matters into their hands and spoil the game.

Here is a case :



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One Heart " ; A, " No bid " ; Y, " Two Clubs " ; B, " Two Spades " ; Z, " Three Diamonds " ; A, " Three Spades " ; Y, " Four Diamonds." All pass.

A opens the 2 of Spades and Z wins with the Ace. Now is the time to decide upon a mode of campaign. To go game it is necessary to make the trumps separately and to lose only one Spade and one Club.

But Z starts off with a round of trumps " to see how they lie," and this prevents him from going game, because as soon as B gets in he leads a trump and prevents Z obtaining three ruffs of the Hearts. That fatal first lead of Z's cost him game and rubber.

Now let us see how the game should have been played. At trick two, Z should lead his Ace of Hearts, followed by

Jack. A, of course, does not cover, and Z trumps in Dummy. Z then leads the Ace of Clubs, followed by a little one which B takes with the King.

After making a winning Spade, B, seeing Z's game, probably leads a trump. This does not hurt Z at all. He takes the trick either in his own hand or Dummy, and proceeds to get his cross ruffs. If B ruffs Clubs Z can over-ruff.

If you work this out you will see that it is the only way in which Z can make game. If he volunteers a round of trumps at the start he destroys the whole fabric and cannot make more than four by cards. While it is true that one round of trumps will do him no harm, two rounds of trumps will, and he should therefore not volunteer a round himself, as it is certain that as soon as B gets in he will lead trumps.

Be on the look-out for hands like this. They are of not infrequent occurrence, and it is necessary to recognise them at once for immediate action.

Stealing a Trick

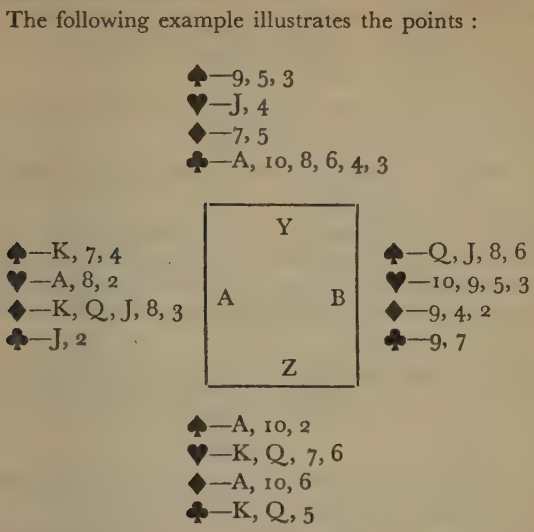
The position frequently arises when Declarer can see a certain number of tricks and no more.

He wants one extra trick for game or perhaps for contract. How can he make that important extra trick ? The ordinary player does not even try. He resigns himself to what he believes to be the inevitable. But the experienced player has a go for it. Perhaps it comes off. Perhaps it doesn't. If it doesn't he is no worse off than if he had not made the effort. And if it does come off he is rewarded by that pleasant glow of satisfaction which comes from successful enterprise. The theory is : *Always give your opponents an opportunity of making a mistake, on the chance that they make it.*

There are several points to be observed in trying to make the extra trick. One is by deliberate false carding or false leading. Another is by attempting to make the extra trick before the opponents have realised their danger. In this position it is necessary to try to steal the trick early in the

game. If you postpone too long the opponents will scent disaster and take no chances.

The following example illustrates the points :



Score : game all. Z bids " One No Trump." All pass. A leads the King of Diamonds, and Z takes stock of the position. He can see eight tricks probably clear—one Spade, one Diamond, and six Clubs. But how is he to make the ninth, which will give him game and rubber ?

Of course, if he exhausts B's Diamonds and B holds the Ace of Hearts there is no difficulty. The ninth trick is there with a Heart. But what if A holds the Ace of Hearts ? Then A must save the game.

This is how it was actually done. Z passed the first two Diamond tricks and won the third Diamond in his hand, and then led the 6 of Hearts.

A, holding the Ace, but not knowing where the King and Queen were and not suspecting the danger, played a small

Heart, and Y won the trick with the Jack. Z had now achieved his object. He played out his Clubs and made game and rubber.

If A had put up his Ace of Hearts he must save the game with two winning Diamonds !

Now you may say, seeing all four hands : " What very bad play on A's part."

Of course it was. He should have saved the game at once while the going was good.

But the real point is that at this early stage he did not realise that the game was in danger. For all he knew, his partner might have a stopper in Clubs or Spades. Z's cunning was in allowing for the psychological effect of his lead early in the game.

Suppose he had postponed his lead of Hearts until he had played out his winning Clubs, then it was a certainty that A would have put up his Ace of Hearts and saved the game.

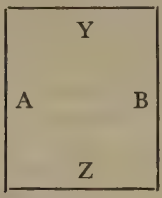
You will see that the whole thing depended upon early action on the part of Z.

A ought not to have been deceived by the ruse, but he was, and, although he is to be condemned, his play was not so bad as it looks, for he could not *know* that Z could make game.

This is an example of stealing a trick, which is by no means uncommon. The moral is, that when you see the saving of the game, pounce upon it quickly. Don't wait for the chance of making an extra trick or tricks. Be sure first of saving the game. So you will escape falling into traps of the nature I have described and prevent Declarer stealing a trick.

Here is another case which shows how a trick may be snatched early in the play :

♠—10, 8, 3
♥—9, 8, 6
♦—None
♣—K, Q, J, 8, 5, 4, 2



♠—K, J, 5, 2
♥—A, Q, 10
♦—A, Q, J, 4
♣—A, 9

Score : love all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump "; A, " Two Spades " ; Y, " Three Clubs " ; B, " No bid "; Z, " Two No Trumps." All pass. A opens 5 of Diamonds, Y discards 6 of Hearts, B plays King of Diamonds, and Z takes the trick with the Ace. Now how would you play ?

The obvious method would be to play out the long Clubs and be content with eleven tricks. But the objection to this is that playing out the Clubs involves Z in five discards. What is he to discard and what is he to keep ?

It is true the opponents have to discard also, but Z's discards would be awkward.

Is there no better plan by which a slam might possibly be made ?

There is, and in actual play Z made grand slam by a simple ruse. At trick two he led his Ace of Clubs, and then, instead of going on with the suit, led his Jack of Spades.

A was marked with A, Q of the suit on the bidding. But, when the Jack was led, A supposed that Z had no more

Clubs and was trying to establish 10 of Spades in Dummy as an entry. So he passed the trick.

Having stolen this trick, Z now played out his Clubs. A and B were put to the torture of discards, and Z made his grand slam.

Again you may say: "How foolish of A not to save the slam and put up his Queen of Spades."

But in A's defence it must be said that at trick three he did not even know that Z had certain game, much less grand slam. From Z's play it looked most probable that he had not a second Club. At any rate, I give the play as it occurred, and it aptly illustrates the point of how a trick may be filched early in the game.

Holding Up an Ace

(*When it should be done and when it should not*)

The proper function of an Ace, speaking generally, is to kill high cards—Kings and Queens. But in Declarer's hand, especially when playing a No Trumper, it often has to be held up for two or three rounds in order to exhaust the adversary of the suit.

The abuse of Aces is shocking to behold and sorely vexatious to the soul. There are some players who will not part with their Aces, and "go to bed" with them eventually. Others play them too soon.

Consider first the position of Declarer when playing a No Trump hand. He holds the Ace of the suit led by his opponents.

Three situations arise: (1) When it does not matter on which trick the Ace is played; (2) When it is imperative to play it immediately; (3) When it should be held up.

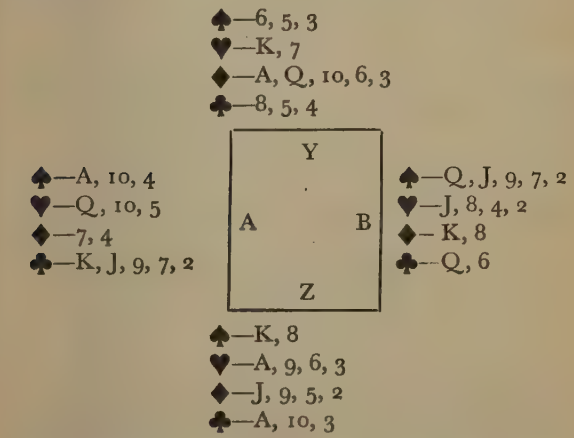
The first situation is the least common, but it does occur from time to time. You may have a hand where you can just make game and when it is immaterial when you play your Ace. Take this hand: Z bids "One No Trump," holding ♠—K, 7, 5, 2; ♥—A, 9, 6; ♦—A, 5, 2; ♣—A, 10, 4. All pass, and Dummy puts down: ♠—A, 4; ♥—8, 5, 3; ♦—7, 4, 3; ♣—K, Q, J, 6, 2.

A leads King of Diamonds. Z will win exactly nine tricks

whether he holds up the Ace of Diamonds or plays it immediately. There is nothing in it, and there is really no object in this case in holding up the Ace.

The second situation is much more interesting. This arises when Declarer fears that the opponents, if allowed to win the first trick, may switch into another suit in which he is unprotected. In the above hand change Z's 7 of Spades into a Queen and his Ace of Hearts into a small card, leaving the other cards unchanged. It will be seen that the game is a certainty if he puts up his Ace at once, but, if he holds it up, the opponents may switch into Hearts and make enough tricks to save the game. They will *probably* continue Diamonds, but it is not a certainty, and Z should not take unnecessary risks of that kind.

A less obvious, but more important, example is the following : Z bid "One No Trump." All passed. Score : love all.

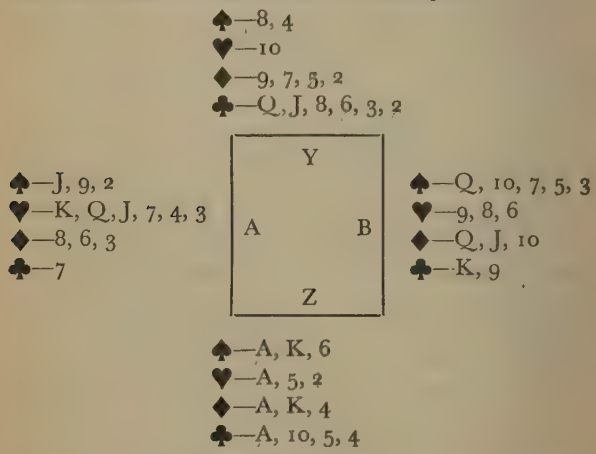


A led the 7 of Clubs, on which B put the Queen ; Z realised that he must not exhaust B's Clubs. He must start the Diamonds after stopping Clubs, and B may have the King of Diamonds. If B then has another Club he will

probably return his partner's lead ; but if B's Clubs have been extracted through Z holding up the Ace, the chances are that B will lead Spades up to Dummy's weakness. And the last thing Z wants is that the lead should come through his once-guarded King of Spades.

So Z puts up the Ace of Clubs at trick one, and finessed the Diamonds. B got in with the King and returned his partner's lead. Z got his contract with two Hearts, four Diamonds, and one Club. If he had held up the Ace of Clubs, the opponents would have defeated the contract by four tricks.

The third situation, when the Ace should be held up, is the most common of all. Here is an example :



Score : game all. Y Z 18 in rubber game. Z dealt and bid " Two No Trumps." All passed. A opened with the King of Hearts. Z quite wrongly won the first trick with the Ace, then led the Ace of Clubs, followed by the 10. B won with the King and returned Hearts. So A B won six tricks and defeated the contract.

Z would have won the game (ten tricks, in fact) if he

had held up the Ace of Hearts until the third round. B's Hearts would have been exhausted, and after winning the Club trick he must lead into Z's hand.

The general rule, therefore, is that Declarer should hold up the stopping Ace in order to exhaust B's holding in the suit led, except in such situations as are described in the first and second examples.

Finessing

If you ask any player to define a finesse, you will find that he has a difficulty in doing so satisfactorily. He will fall back probably on concrete examples, and show you from the cards what is and what is not a finesse.

My dictionary (Chambers's) defines a finesse as " an endeavour at cards by a player holding (say) Queen and Ace to take a trick with a lower card." But this is neither lucid nor comprehensive. I have explained it as " taking a chance on a lower card winning a trick in the suit when you also hold the higher one."

But I must admit that it is not a very complete definition. Mr. R. F. Foster's is better : " A finesse is an attempt to win a trick with a card which is not the best you hold in that suit, nor in sequence with it."

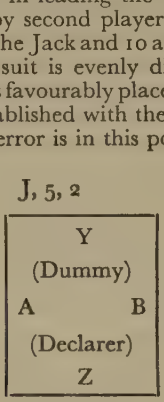
Mr. Wilbur Whitehead puts forward this tentative definition : " A finesse is an attempt by Declarer to win a trick with a card that is not the best he holds in that suit, nor in sequence with it."

" Attempt to win " may be inferred to exclude, as a finesse, any play that is either a known winner or a known loser because the position of outstanding higher cards of the suit is known. It may also be inferred to exclude any play that has no chance to win the current trick, regardless of position of outstanding higher card or cards of the suit.

More mistakes are made about finessing than in any other point of play. Take this not uncommon position : In Dummy are Q , 7, 5. Declarer holds A, 9, 6, 3. He leads the Queen from Dummy and runs it. His left hand adversary takes it with the King, and he complains that his " finesse " has not come off.

Now, of course, this is not a finesse at all. It is merely Queen murder. The proper way to deal with this situation is to lead small from Declarer's hand and put up Dummy's Queen. If the King is in A's hand the Queen will make. If not, the best chance has been taken in the matter. There can be no possible object in leading the Queen from Dummy. If the King is held by second player and put up and Declarer plays his Ace, the Jack and 10 are still winners against him. Whereas if the suit is evenly divided in adversaries' hands, and the King is favourably placed, by the right method of play it may be established with the loss of only one trick.

Another common error is in this position :



It is Dummy's lead. The distribution of the cards between A and B is, of course, unknown to Z. His correct lead from Dummy is a small card, *not* the Jack. If he leads the Jack, B, if he has the King and one other, must cover, and A wins the third round of the suit with the 10. By leading a small card, finessing the Queen, and playing out Ace, Z makes every trick in the suit on the supposition that he can afterwards put himself in as Dummy takes the third round with the Jack.

Suppose the cards lie differently, and A holds K, 10, 6 and B 9, 4. Z, finessing his Queen, will lose the first round, but after that the suit is established. Or if A holds four, say K, 10, 6, 4, and B the 9 only, the advantages of the small lead are still more apparent.

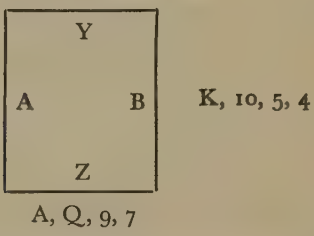
If the Jack is led A *must* make both King and 10. Whereas if the small card is led and Queen finessed, A may still

only make his King, if Z diagnoses the position and takes a second finesse into Dummy's hand against the 10 held by A.

Other positions can be worked out, such as where the K, 10, and another are in B's hand, or even four or five of the suit. The point is that no good can be done by leading Dummy's Jack and finessing it, and it may easily mean the loss of a trick. Unless you hold A, Q, 10, do not lead Jack from Dummy.

The position is different if Z holds A, Q, 10, or even A, Q, 9. In this case Dummy's Jack should be led. Holding the 9 or 10, or both, finesse the Jack towards the A, Q. Holding neither 9 nor 10, finesse a low card towards the A, Q.

The case of the double finesse is interesting, and it sometimes results in a coup. The cards lay :



Z led Dummy's Jack and ran it. When it made he led Dummy's 3, which he took with the 9. He was able to put Dummy in again, and he made every card in the suit.

Of course, the play is open to argument. But the fact to remember is that when Z played he expected to lose one trick in the suit. It did not matter whether A held the King or the 10, so long as he did not hold them both. Z was going to finesse on the supposition that B held one honour.

Do not take a finesse on the first round that could be taken on the second round. Defer every finesse as long as possible.

The reason of this is that frequently each round of the suit led will convey information to you. Thus, holding K, J, 10, x in your hand and Ace to four in Dummy, lead Jack.

Whether or not covered by second player, put up Ace and finesse 10 on second round. It is quite likely the Queen may fall, but if it does not you will have taken the best chance.

If you and Dummy hold between you nine cards of the suit, not including the Queen, and you have A, K, J, and others, do not take a finesse. Go for the drop of the Queen.

For the sake of an extra trick or two do not take a finesse which, if unsuccessful, may lose you the game.

But if the choice lies between making contract of one or two and going game by a successful finesse it is worth taking the risk, even if by so doing you may be down on your contract. Thus you have called "Two No Trumps," and you have a finesse which, if right, will give you game, but, if wrong, will put you one down. The risk is worth taking. But do not take an unnecessary finesse from which you can derive no substantial benefit.

Never finesse against your partner is a good rule, but there are one or two exceptions to it.

(1) With a suit declaration, when you hold Ace and Jack of a suit and either the King or Queen is in Dummy, if your partner leads a small one, you should finesse by playing the Jack, trusting that your partner has the other honour.

(2) At "No Trumps," holding A, J, or A, 10 with Queen doubly guarded in Dummy, you should finesse your Jack or 10 as best means to help partner establish his suit.

Never finesse when playing your top card would definitely defeat an adverse bid.

Drop or Finesse

A common error is the assumption on the part of the Declarer in playing a long suit that the cards will be evenly divided against him in his adversaries' hands.

You hold, for instance, five to the A, K. Dummy provides you with Queen and another. There are six cards of the suit in your opponents' hands.

If they are divided three and three, all will be well, and you draw the lot. But for what reason should it be assumed that they will be divided equally? They may lie six in one hand, or five and one, or four and two. The odds are nearly 2 to 1 against their being equally divided.

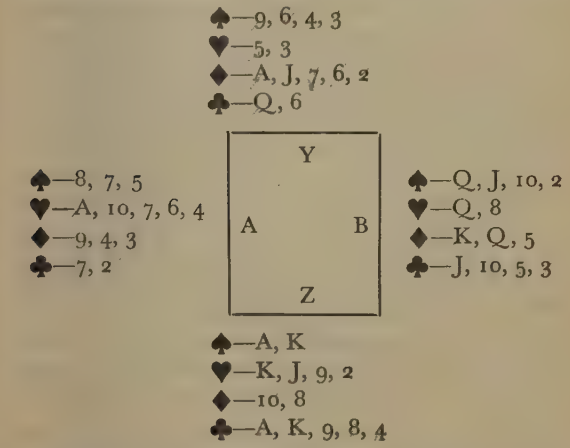
The realisation of this mathematical fact, if properly applied, may help you in many critical situations which involve winning or losing a game.

It is not always wise to go for the chance of the drop. This is more particularly the case in playing a No Trumper.

You will see the average player going bald-headed for it when he holds a five suit with two in his Dummy. But the wary old practitioner is by no means anxious to risk establishing a winner in one of his opponents' hands. He will prefer to go for a *finesse* in another suit.

It is an even chance for a finesse to win or lose as opposed to a 2 to 1 chance of the drop not coming off.

Here is an example :



Z bids No Trumps and A led the 6 of Hearts, which Z won with the King over B's Queen. How, in these circumstances, should Z play to ensure going game against any defence ?

The right course is for Z to go for the finesse in Diamonds and not for the drop in Clubs.

It is true that Z can go game by playing out Clubs at

once and establishing his fifth Club, but he can only do so if B plays wrongly and returns Hearts at once.

Supposing Z plays out Clubs and B takes the fourth round, B should now lead Queen of Spades (and not a Heart), with a view to establishing a Spade trick in his own hand while he still holds King and Queen of Diamonds.

Z now makes his remaining Club and leads 10 of Diamonds, which B should take with the King, and then lead Jack of Spades. Z must now try the finesse in Diamonds, hoping to find the Queen with A. The finesse fails. B gets in with the Queen of Diamonds, leads a winning Spade, and then a Heart. Result : A B make six tricks—two Diamonds, one Club, one Spade, and two Hearts.

Now mark the difference if at trick two Z leads 10 of Diamonds, which B takes with the *King*. He purposely plays a false card to deceive Z. However B plays now, Z must go game. If he leads a Spade, Z leads at trick four another Diamond and finesses the Jack. Diamonds are now established in Dummy's hand, with the Queen of Clubs as entry. If B leads a Heart, the position is still easy for Z, while if he leads a Club he gives the show away.

A small club will be taken by Z with the 8 or 9, while, if B leads the Jack, he will pass it up to and finesse against the 10 on the second round.

The hand, which was given by the American writer, Mr. R. F. Foster, was one from a duplicate game designed to test good play both on the part of Declarer and defenders.

It illustrates the theme of my discussion, that it is often wiser to go for the finesse than the drop. It is an especially valuable example, because, although the finesse goes wrong, the method of play is the only way of getting game if B plays correctly.

Further points about finessing are dealt with in the chapter on " Mathematics That Matter."

False Carding

One of the most powerful weapons the Declarer possesses for befogging the enemy is false carding. False card as often as you can, but false card judiciously.

Holding A, K, and other of a suit, take with the Ace

first, if you want your opponents to go on with the suit. But if you hold A, K only, and you do not want the suit cleared, there is no object in playing the Ace first.

Similarly, if the Queen is led by the first player, and you hold A, K of the suit, it is a mistake to play the Ace upon it. Play the King. It leaves one of your opponents guessing. He does not know whether his partner has the Ace or not. But if you play the Ace he knows for certain that you also have the King, as his partner would not lead the Queen if he held the King.

You are Z, and playing the hand in No Trumps. A leads Jack of Clubs. His lead may be, so far as B knows, from A, K, J and others, or from A, J, 10, or from top of a sequence. If you hold A, K, Q of the suit, win with the Queen, not with the King or Ace. Why? Because this tells B nothing. He may return the lead at the first chance, thinking A holds either the Ace or both the Ace and King.

When you hold A, K, J over a suit led on which B plays the Queen, you should play your Ace, not the King. This may have the effect of puzzling both opponents. A may think his partner has the King, and B may believe that A led from the King.

But when you hold A, K of a suit, and the Queen is led by A, you should take the Queen with the King and not false card with the Ace. B cannot then tell whether A led from A, Q, J, or Q, J, 10. A will know you hold the Ace, but B does not know for certain who holds it.

When a suit is led initially of which you hold only two guards, one in Dummy and one in your own hand, it is generally better to allow the opponents to make the first trick.

Suppose a Club is led, and you hold A, 3 in Dummy, and K, 8, 4 in your own hand. Play small from Dummy and play the 8 from your own hand on the first trick. Not only is the suit stopped effectively, but your adversaries are puzzled as to how the cards lie.

Study the first card led and draw your deductions. Suppose the opening is a small card, you know at once that the leader has not any suit in his hand with three honours, that the suit led is his longest—it may be five, six, or seven of it. If he leads the 2, you know he has no greater length than four.

By application of the Eleven Rule, the cards in Dummy's and your own hand, you can generally tell what strength he has. Work on this information. If, for instance, you find that the opener has six cards of the suit led, that leaves another seven cards in his hand to be accounted for. As the game progresses you may be able to count his hand and know exactly how many cards of the other suits he holds.

Holding four cards of a suit to the A, K, Q in your hand and three of the suit in Dummy, do not be in a hurry to lead that suit. It is highly probable that one of the opponents holds four to the Jack, and by playing out you may establish a trick for him in it, which he could never establish himself.

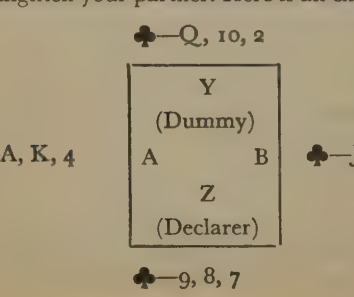
On the other hand, when you hold a long solid suit of five, six, or seven, it is generally advisable to play it out straight away, as the discards it involves from opponents may give useful information as to how the other cards lie. The point to remember is : *Puzzle your adversaries as much as possible* and do not give away your hand.

In opposition it is criminal to play false cards wantonly. It undermines partnership. They should be played only when they can do no harm. These occasions are :

(1) When your partner is too bad to gain information from correct play and it doesn't matter whether you deceive him or not.

(2) When your partner's hand is obviously too weak to be damaged.

(3) When it is of more importance to mislead the Declarer that to enlighten your partner. Here is an example :



A and B require all the tricks to save the game. It is B's lead, and he plays the 2 of Clubs. It would obviously be useless to lead the Jack against the Queen in Dummy. A wins with the *Ace*—a false card, to make the Declarer think that B holds the King—and returns the 4. Z is unlikely to put up the Queen, and plays the 10, and so all three tricks are won by A and B.

A case of false carding which sometimes comes off against a No-Trump declaration is when you hold Q, 10 only of a suit. The Declarer leads the King of the suit, and in his Dummy are A, J, 9. If on the King you throw without hesitation the Queen, the Declarer is almost certain to finesse the 9 on the second round, and your 10 will make, whereas if your 10 falls on the King led the Declarer is more likely to put up the Ace on second round and your Queen falls.

I have seen this ruse successful on several occasions.

Squeeze Tactics

Americans have given us many racy if not always picturesque terms for Bridge. A number of these expressions have caught on in this country and are now used as a matter of course.

After a time their origin is forgotten. It is only comparatively recently that we have heard of " squeeze " play, but now it is quite a familiar word in London clubs.

" Why did you not try the squeeze, partner ? " you will hear a player remark. And no one would like to admit that he does not know what the squeeze means.

It is, in fact, a particularly appropriate and illuminating term, " lifted," I believe, by that most amusing American writer, Mr. Sydney Lenz, from the national game of baseball. The squeeze may be briefly defined as forcing discards. But it is something more than forcing discards in the ordinary way. It means going on forcing discards until you squeeze a winning card or cards out of your adversaries.

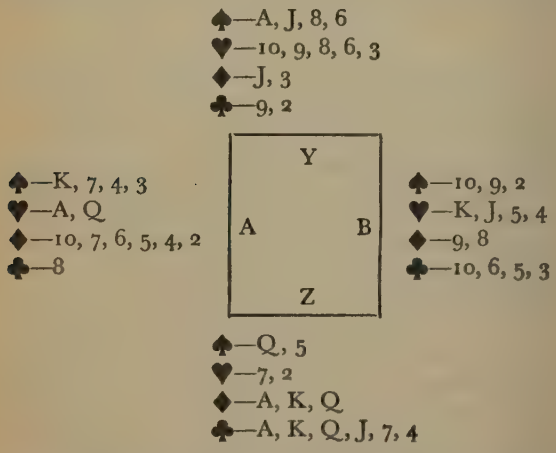
Nearly all the double dummy problems are based upon squeeze tactics, but in actual play at the table the possibilities often pass unrecognised until too late. The average player, and even the advanced player who is in a hurry, concedes tricks when he need not really do so because he

does not realise at the time into what embarrassing positions he can force the enemy by compelling them to discard.

The play itself consists, as Mr. Lenz has explained, simply of laying down a long suit, usually trumps, and compelling the opponents either to discard the top card of a suit or to unguard an essential honour. It is not enough to play all but the last trump—as is generally done—because it is always the last discard that puts the opponents in distress.

It is very strange what a deep reluctance there is to giving up the last trump in the hand. I suppose there is something psychological about it—the primitive instinct of holding fast to a last remaining defence.

Here is an example from play where the Declarer made a grand slam, although, seeing all four hands, the result looks impossible.



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump." All pass. A opened the 5 of Diamonds, and Z took the first nine tricks with three Diamonds and six Clubs. At the ninth lead A had the Ace of Hearts and the four Spades. Having to discard, he kept the Ace of Hearts and left himself

K, 7, 4 in Spades. B, in his turn, had to discard from a K, J, of Hearts and 10, 9, 2 of Spades.

Not wanting to bare the King of Hearts, he threw a Spade, retaining only 10, 9. Z then led the Queen of Spades, and made a grand slam whether A covered with the King or not.

As a matter of fact, A covered, and afterwards blamed B for not keeping his 10 of Spades twice guarded, while B cursed A for not keeping his King three times guarded. The former would have saved both slams and the latter would have saved the big slam. If both A and B had thrown a Heart at that crucial trick nine, there would have been no slams.

Would you have been caught like A and B, or would you have thrown away your top Hearts and kept your Spades ?

Elimination

" Elimination Play " is one of the finer points of the game which escapes the attention of most players. It is subtle, and a realisation of its possibilities often enables a game to be won which would not otherwise be won, or slams to be made which are otherwise unattainable.

It may be defined as playing out a suit or suits until exhausted in order to compel opponents to open up another suit to your advantage

It consists in " stripping " the hands of the opponents, so that when they get in they cannot lead a particular suit to your disadvantage. That is to say, the alternative presented to them is either to lead a suit on which you get a discard in one hand and a ruff in the other, or to lead up to a suit in which you or your Dummy hold the tenace.

It is hard to teach or explain except by examples. It is practised by fine players, but its use is ignored by average players, who do not even begin to realise its opportunities. If you try to enlighten them about it, they will reply : " Oh, of course, I could have done it at double dummy, but I could not possibly know how the cards lay."

But, in actual fact, by intelligent deduction, they could have told in most cases how the cards lay.

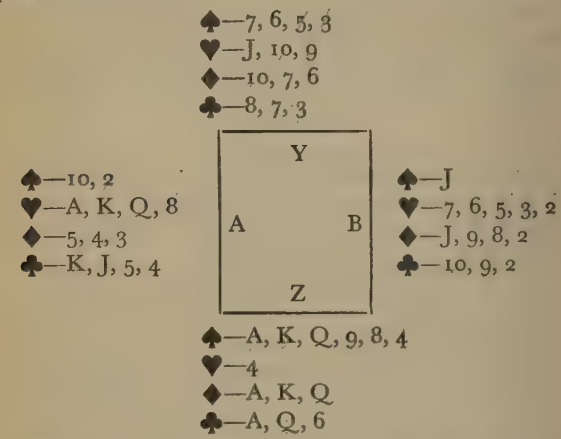
To bring off elimination play you must count the cards most carefully and be able to place the lead at the critical juncture.

It often happens in a hand that it appears to the player

that the only chance of getting game and contract is to make a successful finesse.

Elimination play, when the opportunity offers, does away with the necessity of taking a finesse. A finesse offers, as a rule, a 50 per cent. chance of winning ; but the player who understands elimination play will, of course, exchange a 50 per cent. chance for a certainty.

Here is an interesting hand which illustrates elimination possibilities :



Score : game all. Z bids " Three Spades " ; all pass.

A leads two rounds of Hearts, the second being trumped by Z.

It is obvious that Z has game in Spades. But how can he make five by cards, viz. eleven tricks ?

The play is as follows :

Trick 1. King of Hearts won by A.

Trick 2. Queen of Hearts won by Z with the 8 of Spades.

Tricks 3 and 4. Two rounds of Spades to exhaust adverse trumps.

Tricks 5, 6, and 7. Three rounds of Diamonds to eliminate the suit from Y and Z's hands.

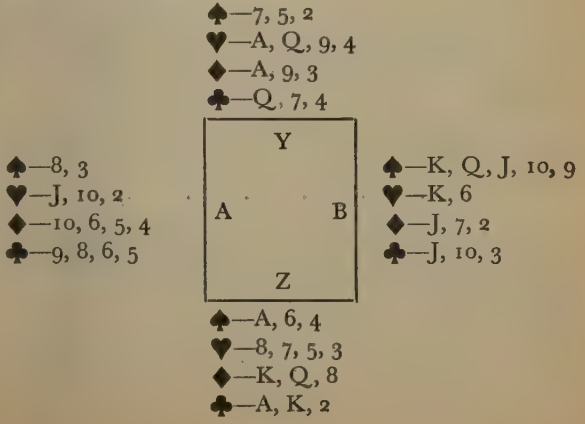
Trick 8. Dummy put in by leading the 4 of Spades from Z.

Trick 9. Jack of Hearts from Dummy, on which Z discards the 6 of Clubs.

A has now only a Heart or a Club to lead. If he leads a Heart, Z trumps in Dummy and discards his Queen of Clubs. If he leads a Club, Z wins both tricks, and thus, in either case, five by cards.

The chance to make an extra trick or two when game is assured may not appeal very strongly to some players. "Why fuss?" is their attitude. "So long as I get game it does not matter." Of course, that is the wrong point of view. It should be the aim of every player to squeeze out of every hand the utmost it can yield. Only by so doing can you experience the full pleasure of Bridge. To miss a trick that might have been made is to the advanced player and the expert a cause of reproach. Most of us miss tricks every rubber without knowing it. We are on the way to becoming experts when we realise at the end of a hand the what-might-have-been.

But, to show how this elimination process may work in a game where it would not otherwise be made, take this example from actual play:



Score : game all. A B, 18 in rubber game. B deals, and bids " One Spade " ; Z, " One No Trump " ; A, " No bid " ; Y, " Two No Trumps." All pass.

A opens the 8 of Spades, B plays the 9, and Z the 4. B continues with the King of Spades. Z plays his Ace, and the 3 falls from A.

Z now knows that A has no more Spades. Z can see eight tricks " sitting," but he cannot see the ninth trick to give him game and rubber unless the Heart finesse comes off.

But he tries elimination play. Instead of playing the Hearts at once, he plays off the Diamonds and the Clubs. Both opponents follow throughout the play of the Diamonds and the Clubs, and therefore, judging by the fall of the cards, unless B has false carded in either suit, B has left three Spades and two Hearts. It therefore seems almost certain that if he puts B in to make his Spades, he must lead up to Dummy's A, Q of Hearts in the end.

This proved to be the case, and Z won the game and rubber.

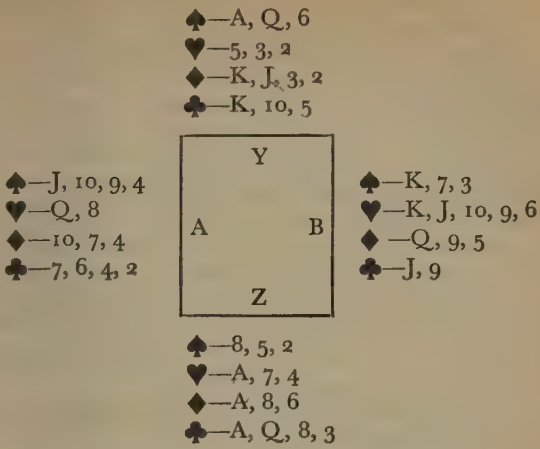
Very simple, no doubt, when it is all set out for you like this. But how many players—even experienced players—would have thought this out in course of play and acted upon it ?

Nine out of ten players would try the Heart finesse and just fail to make game.

. . . . . .

Many hands which offer opportunities of elimination play pass unrecognised. The player never sees the point, and is blissfully unconscious that he could have made an extra trick or tricks.

Here is a case from play :



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump " ; A and Y, " No bid " ; B, " Two Hearts " ; Z, " Two No Trumps " ; all pass.

This is how the game should be played on elimination lines.

A opens the Q of Hearts, which wins, and continues with the 8, which Z takes with the Ace. Z now knows that B had originally five Hearts only. How does he know that ?

Because A has played Q and 8, all the lower cards are accounted for and A can have no more. Therefore Z rightly takes the second trick with his Ace of Hearts.

Z now plays two rounds of Clubs, and B drops the Jack on the second round.

Z now takes stock of the position. He sees that if he finesses Spades or Diamonds wrongly and B gets in he cannot go game. After having made his two Clubs, he therefore puts B in with a Heart. B makes his three winning Hearts, and is then obliged to lead up to Y in Spades or Diamonds. It does not matter which suit he chooses, as Z

must win either with four Clubs, three Diamonds, one Heart, and one Spade, or with four Clubs, two Diamonds, one Heart, and two Spades.

In actual play Z missed it. After taking the second Heart Z led out four rounds of Clubs. On the last two rounds, to which he could not follow, B discarded his 3 and then his 7 of Spades.

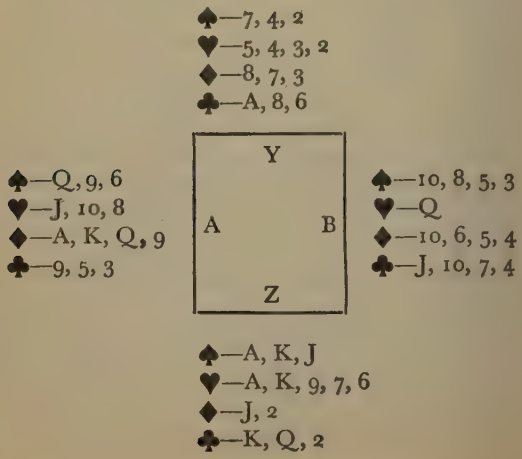
This convinced Z that A held the King, and he led a Spade, finessed it, and B saved the game.

A similar result would have been effected if Z had led diamonds and finessed the Jack.

Of course, you may say that B's discards were very risky, and that Z, if he had put up the Ace of Spades, would have made his game. But B could not afford to discard a Diamond or a Heart, and he took the best chance of saving the game.

Playing it on elimination lines, Z could make certain of his game after exhausting B's Clubs.

Another excellent example I take from Mr. Milton Work's *Auction Bridge Complete* :



Z deals, and bids "One Heart." All pass.

A opens with the King of Diamonds.

You are Z, and you make the necessary pause after the opening lead and take stock of the position. You see at once that if the adverse Hearts are divided two and two you must go game. All you can lose is two Diamonds and a Spade if Queen of Spades is on the wrong side. But supposing that the trumps and the Spades are not divided as you wish, how can you still make sure of game?

This is where elimination play comes in, and the example is particularly instructive, because you will see that the cards are placed just in the wrong way for Z. I am open to wager that nine players out of ten would just miss game on Z's hand. They would go for the Spade finesse, and would lose two Diamonds, one Heart, and one Spade. Only those who have studied the possibilities of elimination would have a shot for it.

This is how the game must be won:

A wins tricks one and two with Diamonds, and Z trumps the third round of the suit. When he wins trick three he naturally tries to drop the adverse trumps by leading A, K. Failing to do so, he realises that A is left with the high trump, which must win a trick, and, as the adversaries have already taken two tricks, the loss of a fourth trick will prevent the making of game. If, however, at trick six Dummy be put in the lead with the Ace of Clubs and the Spade finesse be tried, Z would have a 50 per cent. chance of taking all the Spade tricks.

But the player who understands elimination principles exchanges the chance for a certainty by leading three rounds of Clubs. By this method he eliminates Clubs from his two hands, so that if the thirteenth Club be led he could ruff in Dummy and discard from his own hand. The Diamond suit is already eliminated so far as Y Z are concerned. Z, therefore, after the three Club tricks are played, leads a trump and places the lead with A, either to lead a Diamond or a Spade, or, if he has it, the thirteenth Club. Whatever A leads the result is the same. Z either gets a discard of his Spade or is led up to it in that suit.

Very neat and very simple when it is all explained.

Coups

The Bath coup is a useful device which frequently results in making an extra trick. The situation arises when you have A, J, and another of a suit, and an opponent holding the K, Q, leads the King. You play a small one in the hope that the opponent will continue the suit. If he does so, you make two tricks in the suit instead of one.

The Bath coup is particularly useful in playing No Trumps. Z has called "One No Trump." A, holding K, Q, 10 to six Diamonds, and another Ace, leads the King of Diamonds. Z, with A, J, and a little one, should play the little one and allow the King to make. If A goes on with the suit, Z holds the tenace over him, and makes two tricks in the suit. Should Z put up the Ace first time, all A's Diamonds will be good if he can get his partner B into the lead.

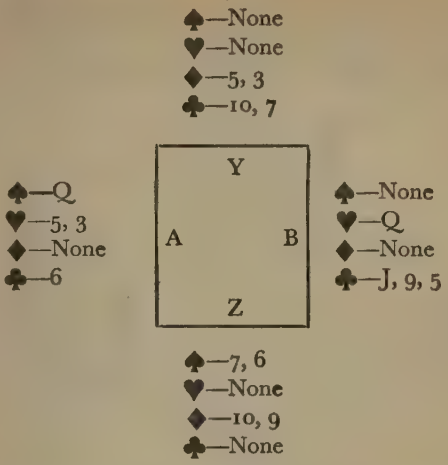
The Bath coup can often be played towards the end of the hand, when Declarer can count the cards and knows how they lie. A skilful player will often make just the one extra trick necessary for game by means of this device.

The grand coup is a more difficult piece of strategy. It may be defined as getting rid of a superfluous trump by the holder of the long trump suit.

To many players it will seem almost inconceivable that you can ever hold too many trumps. Of course, if you have nine, ten, or more the situation is unlikely to embarrass you. But, paradoxically enough, there are occasions when, holding six or seven and finding an unfavourable distribution against you, the possession of an extra trump is a hindrance rather than an advantage. When the position is such that it necessitates your trumping your Dummy's best card in order to get the lead where you want it, this is known as the grand coup.

In his famous book on Whist, Cavendish explains the grand coup at length, and gives several examples of its use. A player should always be on the look-out for it when he has five trumps, especially if a trump is led to his right.

Here is a Whist case :

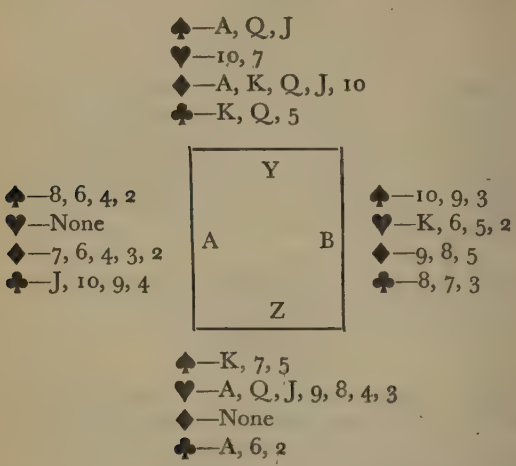


Clubs are trumps. B knows that Y has 10 and another Club. Z leads the 10 of Diamonds. A trumps with the 6 of Clubs, and B under-trumps with the 5 of Clubs.

If he retains his three trumps, and Y refuses to trump the Q of Spades which A will lead next, B loses a trick in Clubs. By this coup A B make all the tricks.

The essence of the coup is this. In course of play you discover that your right-hand adversary has two trumps left, and you have three. One or both of his trumps will be winners if you have to lead the suit from your own hand. You must, therefore, contrive before the twelfth trick to get the lead into Dummy so as to lead through the holder of the two trumps. When this involves ruffing a winner of Dummy's in order to reduce the number of your trumps to the number held by your opponent, you have brought off the grand coup. It is a pretty piece of strategic play, but opportunities to use it do not occur frequently. When they do they are often missed, even by experienced players.

The average player, with game and rubber staring him in the face, does not trouble about extra tricks. He is quite content with the good the gods give him. But it is part of the fun of the game to squeeze out every possible trick and make a grand slam by manipulation.



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " Three Hearts." All pass.

At first sight you will be inclined to say, " Well, it must be a grand slam for Z, and nothing can prevent it."

But look a little closer and you will see that B has four Hearts to the King, and, so long as he does not cover when Hearts are led from Dummy, how is Z to catch that King ?

Z with his seven trumps must eventually get into the lead and have to lead up to B's King. How can it be prevented ?

The only way it can be done is by Z trumping Dummy's winners and putting Dummy in at the eleventh trick, so that B must play a trump which Z can over-trump.

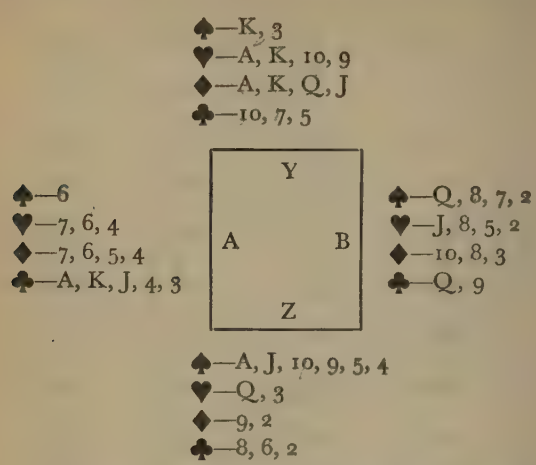
This is how it works. The underlined card takes the trick.

Tricks	A	Y	B	Z
1	♣—J	♣—Q	♣—3	♣—2
2	♠—2	♥—10	♥—2	♥—8
3	♠—4	♥—7	♥—5	♥—3
4	♦—2	♦—A	♦—5	♠—5
5	♦—3	♦—K	♦—8	♥—4
6	♠—6	♠—J	♠—3	♠—7
7	♦—4	♦—Q	♦—9	♥—9
8	♠—8	♠—A	♠—9	♠—K
9	♦—6	♦—J	♣—7	♥—J
10	♣—4	♣—K	♣—8	♣—6
11	♦—7	♦—10	♠—10	♣—A
12	♣—9	♠—Q	♥—6	♥—Q
13	♣—10	♣—5	♥—K	♥—A

Of course, both Z and B could discard differently. Z, in his discards after B's Diamonds are exhausted, will be guided by B's discards. The issue is not affected so long as the lead is in Y's hand at the eleventh trick.

The hand is an illustration of the triple grand coup, as Z must trump Dummy's winners three times in order to reduce the number of his trumps to two at the right moment, so that he may not have the lead at the twelfth trick.

Here is an example of a Radio game broadcast in the United States in which four famous experts took part :



Score : game all. A deals, and bids " One Club " ; Y, " One Heart " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " One Spade." All pass.

A plays the King, Ace, and Jack of Clubs in succession ; B discarding the 3 of Diamonds on the Jack. A then leads the 7 of Hearts and Z wins with the Queen. Z then leads Jack of Spades, overtakes with Dummy's King, and returns the 3, finessing the 10 ; A discarding the 4 of Diamonds. Z's next lead is the 3 of Hearts, which is won by Dummy's King ; *and then Dummy's Ace of Hearts is trumped by Z.*

The 2 of Diamonds is won by Dummy's Jack, and Dummy's 10 of Hearts is trumped by Declarer, who then leads 9 of Diamonds, Dummy winning with the Queen, Dummy's King of Diamonds forces B to trump, his 8 being overtaken by Z, whose Ace of Spades wins the last trick. Z therefore makes four by cards, game, and rubber.

This was a case of the double-grand coup.

When all four hands are shown and the line of play

indicated, this looks very simple, but how many players would grasp the necessity early in the game of trumping Dummy's winners?

As for the average players, the very idea of trumping their own winning tricks is anathema to them, and it requires a lot of rubbing in to make them realise that there are occasions when such a course is necessary.

CHAPTER II

Defenders' Play

The Leads

The following are the chief conventional leads, from high card combinations, which every player should know by heart :

At No Trumps

From A, K, Q, etc., lead King, followed by Queen.

From A, K, and five or more, lead Ace.

From A, Q, J, etc., lead Queen.

From A, J, 10, etc., lead Jack.

From A, and three or more small ones ; lead fourth best.

From K, Q, J, and one or more, lead King.

From K, Q, 10, etc., lead King.

From K, Q, and five or more, lead King.

From K, Q, and two, three, or four small ones, lead fourth best.

From K, J, 10, etc., lead Jack.

From Q, J, 10 or 9, lead Queen.

From J, 10, and 9 or 8, lead Jack.

From 10, 9, 8, etc., lead 10.

From all other combinations lead fourth best.

At the Trump Suit Game

From A, K, Q, etc., lead King, followed by Queen.

From A, K, etc., lead King.

From A, K only, lead Ace, then King.

From A, Q, J, lead Ace, followed by Queen.

From A and two or more small ones, lead Ace.

At the Trump Suit Game

From A and one other, lead Ace.
From K, Q, J, and one or more small ones, lead King.
From K, Q, etc., lead King.
From K, J, 10, etc., lead Jack.
From Q, J, and 10 or 9, lead Queen.
From J, 10, 9, or 8, lead Jack.
From 10, 9, 8, lead 10.

At No Trumps when your Partner has made a Major Suit Bid

Nearly every No Trumper has its weak spot or spots. I might add, with justice, that many of the No Trumpers of some so-called forward players are all weak spots.

But, putting aside these and also the cast-iron No Trumpers, and considering only the justifiable bids of average or slightly over-average strength, the question arises how to discover the vulnerable point in the Declarer's hand.

The saving of the game may depend upon the initial lead. You have to make it before you have seen Dummy. Are there any principles to guide you?

Of course, if your partner has called a suit you should lead it at once, unless you have strong reason to believe that you have a better suit which can be more easily established. Even if you have only one of your partner's suit, it is much better to lead it than to open a weak suit of your own in which your partner may have no assistance. Yet many players persistently open their own suits, excusing themselves by saying: "I didn't open your suit, partner, because the Declarer had gone over it."

You have called, say, a Spade. Your left-hand opponent bids "One No Trump" and secures the declaration. You have a chance of saving the game, holding A, K to five Spades and Ace of Clubs. But your partner opens a Diamond of which you hold two little ones. The "No Trump" Declarer gets in at once, forces the Ace of Clubs out of your hand before your Spades are cleared. Your hand, which might possibly have been worth five tricks, if your suit had been opened, makes only three.

You probably say : " Partner, why didn't you open my suit. We should have saved the game ? "

He replies : " Well, I had only two little ones, and I knew the ' No Trump ' Declarer held the suit guarded, so I thought I had better open my suit."

And what was his suit ? K, J or Q, J to five or six Diamonds, and no card of entry ! Maddening !

Here is an example : A deals, and, holding ♥—A, K, Q, 10, and some other fair cards, bids " One Heart " ; Y goes " One No Trump " ; B and Z, " No bid " ; A, " Two Hearts " ; Y, " Two No Trumps." All pass.

B reasoning that Y, going " No Trumps " twice over A's Hearts, must be well guarded in Hearts (as a matter of fact he had five to the nine), and that to lead his singleton Jack of Hearts would be forcing his partner into the lion's jaw, leads fourth best of a five suit in Diamonds headed by the Ace. A plays the Queen, and Y takes with the King, and proceeds with Dummy's help to take eight more tricks, thus giving him game.

Had B led his Jack of Hearts, A would have made four Hearts, B the Ace of Diamonds, and the game will have been saved.

The importance of leading at once your partner's suit, especially if it is a major suit, at No Trumps can hardly be over-estimated. By his bid, especially if it be an initial bid, your partner has shown strength and perhaps length in a suit. It does not follow that it is cast-iron. If the No-Trump bidder is calling correctly, of course it cannot be. But, at any rate, it is a " pointer " to you, and it is surely much better to open that suit than to make a blind lead.

This argument is even stronger when your partner has, as in the case given, called his suit twice. He has shown then considerable strength in it, and to open, as did B, a suit of Diamonds of which he himself held the Ace was almost as bad a lead as could be made. Even if A held the King or Queen, what good would the lead of that suit be ?

Now I want to rub this in well, and I hope all offenders will take it seriously to heart. *Against a No Trumper you should open your partner's suit even if you have only one of it.*

I know there are players who argue that with only one it is better to show their own suit, as, if they open their partner's suit and get in again, they can never lead it a second time. But this is a fallacy. Surely it must be better to lead to your partner's call rather than open a suit blind in which he may have no support at all. You do not know the nature of his hand. But he has shown strength in a suit. It may be guarded singly or doubly by the "No Trump" Declarer. Never mind. Your partner may have two cards of re-entry in his hand. Anyway, by leading his suit you have done your duty by him and given him a chance. Because in some instances you may find it would have been more profitable to have opened your own suit is no real argument. The point is the correct play.

The Exceptions

Of course there is an exception, and that is when you have a long solid suit of your own, or a long suit that can be established with the loss of one trick, and you hold also a certain card of re-entry. It is useless to open a ragged suit which you have not the least chance of establishing unless you should happen to find your partner with high cards in it.

The only occasion then on which you should not open your partner's declared major suit is when you have the certain saving of the game in your own hand by opening your own suit.

The above remarks apply to a major-suit bid by your partner. When he has made an initial minor suit you can use your discretion, because his minor suit may have been made on three only. In this case, if you hold a good suit of four or five yourself with a card of entry, and little or no support in his minor suit, you are justified in opening your own suit.

What Card Should You Lead ?

When you hold three, four, or more of your partner's suit the question arises as to which card you should lead.

Here opinions differ, and it is impossible to lay down an inflexible rule which will prove the best in all circumstances.

The rule adopted by the majority of players in this country is that you should lead always the highest of his suit from three. When you hold four, opinions differ, but I think the balance is in favour of leading the highest. With five or more, the fourth best should undoubtedly be led, for obvious reasons.

But in America expert opinion is against the lead of the highest from three if headed by any of the top honours—A, K, Q, or J. In this case you should, they say, always lead the lowest.

There is a good deal to be said on both sides. On the one hand, experience teaches undoubtedly that the lead of the highest is occasionally of inestimable advantage to the Declarer. Sometimes it gives him two tricks in the suit where he might only make one. Or the knowledge that the highest card will be led gives him a guard in the suit which he might not have.

Take this case. Z bids "One No Trump"; A and Y, "No bid"; B, "Two Spades"; Z, "Two No Trumps"; all pass.

Z has a good No Trumper, but his guard in Spades is only Queen and two little ones. A, who has the first lead, holds ♠—K, 5, 2. So long as he leads the King, Z's Queen is safe. But suppose he leads the 2, and B puts up the Ace (holding A, J, 10, etc.) and returns the Jack, Z's Queen is killed.

That is one aspect, and it is easy to recall other positions where the lead of the highest undoubtedly favours the Declarer. This is particularly the case when leader holds Q, x, x, and Declarer K, J, 9. By the lead of the Queen the Declarer makes two tricks in the suit when he might make only one.

So emphatic is Mr. Milton Work in his insistence on the benefit of the lead of the lowest from three, that he states, since the lead has become conventional in the United States: "I have seen it save dozens of games, and have never seen it cost a single trick when *intelligently used*."

On the other side, there are several objections, in my

opinion, to leading the lowest of three. First of all, your partner often cannot tell if you are leading from a singleton or a doubleton in the suit. This applies particularly when the card led is a small one, but it also applies when you lead a fairly high card. Suppose, for instance, you hold Q, 8, 7 and lead the 7, your partner may not be able to tell that you are leading the lowest of three, and may think the 8 and Queen are both in the Declarer's hand, and play accordingly. Then there is always the risk of blocking your partner's suit or failing to establish it early.

A further disadvantage is that, when you lead the lowest of three, your partner, even if he suspects you hold an honour, is probably quite in the dark as to your holding. He may not be able to tell what honour you possess. To puzzle your partner, especially in the early stages of the game, is bad. You want to make things easy for him. Often it is best to give away a trick to Declarer than to leave your partner in doubt as to where the high cards of his suit lie.

My own practice with a suit of three headed by a major honour is to lead the highest unless I have supported my partner's bid. Thus, if my partner has called "One Spade" and has been over-called by "One No Trump," and I have supported to "Two Spades," which has been over-called by "Two No Trumps," I then lead my lowest of three, as it cannot deceive my partner. He knows I would not support his Spade bid without some help in the suit. This I have found a useful distinction.

Holding four or five with an honour, you should lead, with four, your lowest, and with five your lowest but one.

With such a holding it is most probable that you have supported his bid, thereby telling him that you have length or strength in it.

Thus your partner has called "One Spade," over-called by "One No Trump." You hold ♠—K, 9, 6, 4, 2, and call "Two Spades," which in turn is over-called by "Two No Trumps," at which Declaration the game is played.

Your correct lead then is the 4 of Spades. This does not mislead your partner. He knows that you would not have supported a Spade bid if your highest Spade of the suit had

been the 4. He plays his highest Spade on it, and, if it wins, returns the suit. Should the " No Trump " Declarer hold only the guarded Queen, this play will often enable you to catch it. Whereas if you had led out the King and followed it up with a small one, the Declarer must make the Queen.

Blind Lead against a No Trumper

When your partner has not made a bid, and you have to open against a No Trumper, the situation is entirely different. Then you open your longest suit, leading the fourth highest of it, unless you hold a sequence, when you lead according to the table given at the beginning of this chapter.

I advocate adherence to this rule however bad your hand. Some players, when their hands are very weak, have a habit of leading what they call a strengthening card of a short suit. But, if you do not know what suit your partner holds, it is only a shot in the dark, and may just as likely strengthen your adversary as your partner.

Here is a case : Leader held ♠—7, 5, 4, 2 ; ♥—6, 3 ; ♦—Q, 3, 2 ; ♣—9, 8, 7, 6. A bad and practically worthless hand. Instead of leading the 9 of Clubs, the player led the Queen of Diamonds as a supposedly " strengthening card." He led right up to Declarer's A, K, J, 10, whereas if he had led properly he would have been bound to make his Queen.

When you have a bad hand, my advice is don't try these tactics. Your lead should be the one calculated to do the least harm, and you will generally do the least harm by leading your longest suit, however weak it may be.

A useful tip is when you hold two five suits in your hand, one in a major and the other in a minor suit, open the major suit (the fourth highest of it), even though it may be slightly weaker than the minor. It is more probable that the Declarer is weaker in the major than in the minor.

If you hold a four suit headed by the A, K, and a five suit headed by Q, J, open the five suit. Should you hold two four suits—one headed by A, K, and the other headed by Q, J or J, 10—open the weaker suit before you lose your

A, K in the stronger. Your A, K are always winners, and the fact that you hold them makes it unlikely that your partner will have an honour in the suit.

Avoid especially the bad habit of some players of leading out originally an Ace or King from a three or four suit to "have a look round." This is far more likely to help the Declarer than it is to assist you or your partner.

Blind Lead against a Suit Declaration

The principle to guide you in your initial blind lead is, if possible, to lead a card which will not cause you or your partner to sacrifice any possible trick. Therefore :

(1) *Avoid opening from a three-card suit headed by King or Queen.*—This lead is, for some reason or other, a favourite lead with mediocre players. They hate leading suits in which they hold no winners. If you lead from a three-suit King high, and your partner has the Ace or Queen, no harm is done. But if he has not, it may well happen that you give away a trick in the suit unnecessarily.

(2) *Avoid a strengthening card in a weak suit.*—This is also a very popular lead. Yet the chances are two to one that you establish the suit for the Declarer by making your partner play out his winning card.

For example, you hold Queen and two others. You lead the Queen as a strengthening card. Your partner holds the Ace, and Dummy has no honour. Declarer holds K, J, etc. You have thrown away a trick in the lead. The same applies often to a lead of the Jack from Jack to three. The lead is also bad, as your partner may mistake it for a doubleton.

(3) *Avoid a doubleton lead when you have only two little trumps.*—A doubleton is very seldom successful unless you are able to stop the trump lead at least once. Its two chief objections are : (*a*) it may make your partner sacrifice a probable trick, (*b*) establish the suit for the Declarer by taking out your partner's winning cards in the suit.

These objections apply also to a singleton lead, but, whereas a singleton lead has some chance of success, a doubleton has little or none. You invite your partner either to give up a command of the suit or to sacrifice a probable

trick for the sake of a problematic ruff on third round, by which time it is more than probable Declarer will have extracted your trumps.

Lead of a Singleton

There are still to be found players who object to the lead of a singleton. I have heard it stigmatised as " sneakish," " unsporting," and " Bumble Puppy." Of course, it is very annoying when a Declarer, who otherwise had game " sitting," finds his plans upset by the successful lead of a singleton. But it is absurd to take exception to the lead. At Auction Bridge, unlike Whist, where the conditions of play are quite different, a singleton may be the best lead that could possibly be made. It may be the only lead that can possibly save the game. On the other hand, it may be the very worst lead, and may lose a game that might have been saved with any other lead. The player who opens a singleton is always taking a risk. When it comes off his partner says, " How clever ! " When it doesn't, his partner may say, " If only you hadn't opened that wretched singleton all would have been well."

Are there any principles to guide the opener as to how, when, and where a singleton should be led ? I think it is easier to state the conditions under which it should not be led. A singleton should not be opened haphazard or at random or just on chance, or because no other lead suggests itself. Several considerations come in, based upon probabilities, possibilities, and the bidding. You have also to bear in mind what interpretation your partner is likely to put upon the lead. Will he necessarily *know* that your opening is from a singleton and return the suit to you at the first opportunity ? If he has made a bid, and, instead of leading the suit he has called, you open another, he should read it without doubt as a singleton.

But it is only in certain circumstances that you should open a singleton in preference to your partner's suit. It is no use doing it if you hold only one or even two little trumps. The ideal condition under which to open a singleton is

when you hold Ace and two or three little trumps, or King and two or three little trumps.

To make this clear, take this hand. Your partner has bid "One Heart" and has been over-called by next player with "Three Spades," which declaration stands. You hold ♠—A, 5, 3, 2 ; ♥—4, 2 ; ♦—7 ; ♣—9, 8, 6, 5, 3, 2. Probably your only chance to make a little trump is to open with your singleton Diamond. If your partner has the Ace of it, well and good. He must return it at once. But if he hasn't you have still a chance of making a small trump. Suppose Declarer takes the Diamond trick and leads a Spade. You put up your Ace, lead a Heart, which your partner takes, and returns you a Diamond. Of course, this may fail if your partner has not the Ace of Hearts. But you have taken the best chance of making your hand worth two tricks instead of one against the Spade declaration, and this one trick may mean the saving of the game.

A doubleton is nearly always a bad lead. But there are exceptions. Spades are trumps and you have to lead from this hand : ♠—A, 3, 2 ; ♥—A, Q, 9, 4 ; ♦—6, 5 ; ♣—10, 5, 4, 2.

On this hand I would lead the 6 of Diamonds, because, if my partner has any strength in it, say K, Q, and others, I could lead it again when I got in with the Ace of Spades, and get a ruff on the third round.

But without the Ace of Spades I should not lead the doubleton, but the 2 of Clubs.

Another bad lead is from a suit of three, four, or five, headed by the King.

I would rather open any short suit than make such a lead. Unless your partner has the Ace or Queen, it often means that you will never make your King at all. Whereas, if you do not open the suit and the Ace is on your right hand, you will probably make the King.

Nearly as bad is a lead from a suit headed by K, J, or K, J, 10. Here again, if you don't open it, you may make one or even two tricks in the suit.

An initial lead from a tenace is bad. A tenace, I should explain, is the best and third best, second and fourth best, or best, third best and fifth best cards of a suit. A, Q are

known as the major tenace, K, J, the minor tenace, A, Q, 10 constitute a double tenace.

With any of these combinations you want the suit to come up to you, not to lead it.

A mistake that is made by many players is to lead against a suit declaration a low card from a suit headed by an Ace. This is a very bad lead.

First of all it places your partner " under the hammer." If he has got the King he does not like to play it, as he thinks the Declarer will " kill " it. If he has got the King and plays it, first round, your lead has done no good. He would have made his King, anyhow. But if he has not got the King your lead may have done great harm, enabling the adversary to take the first trick with a small card, and perhaps ruff your Ace later in Dummy.

It is sometimes very tempting to lead low from an Ace, hoping that the King may be in Dummy, and that your partner's Queen may win the first trick. This play will occasionally prove successful, but in the long run it is a trick-loser, because there are many instances of singletons, even of single Kings, and also of two-card suits, where, unless the Ace be led, Declarer will win the first trick and discard the other card before the Ace can take a trick.

Don't lead out A, K of a suit if you are likely to establish a winning trick or tricks in the Declarer's hand.

Lead of a Trump

A very popular blind lead is to open with a trump. This is an old Whist principle—" When in doubt, lead trumps." It is argued by the upholders of this lead that, as the Declarer is presumably strong in trumps and must make them, there can be no harm in leading them. But this is a fallacy. Often by opening trumps you are playing the Declarer's game, and possibly killing a winner in your partner's hand.

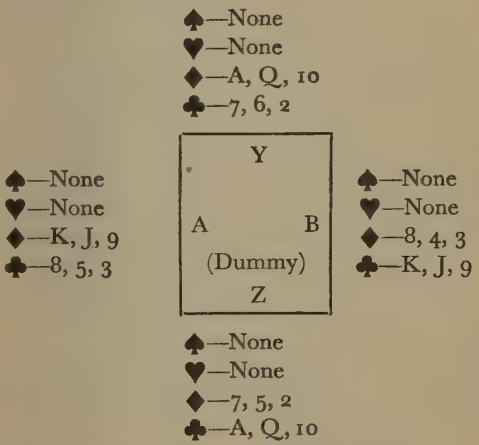
At the same time there are situations when a trump lead is excellent. This is particularly evident when both opponents have supported each other in the trump suit and no other good lead is indicated.

Against a high declaration of five, make any winning trick or tricks in your hand immediately. Open with an Ace, and have a look at Dummy to guide your second lead.

Lead Through Strength and up to Weakness

That you should lead through strength and up to weakness is a principle with which every player past the beginner's stage is familiar. It means that if you are sitting on Dummy's right you lead through Dummy's strength, if on Dummy's left you lead up to Dummy's weakness, each player selecting suits for leading in which he is himself weak.

Here is a typical example :



Score : game all. A, B, 20 in rubber game. B is playing the game in a call of " One Heart," and has made six tricks. Z has taken the seventh, and now leads. If Y and Z play properly, they make the rest. Z leads 7 of Diamonds, Y wins, and leads 7 of Clubs. So long as Y and Z lead through strength and up to weakness they must defeat the contract.

This is elementary, and, when you see all four hands, is

ridiculously easy, but in actual play I have often known the thing missed because players are often in such a hurry to make their winners.

But there is more in the rule than is shown in this very patent example. There is a corollary attached to it. Lead through strength and up to weakness in any suit only as long as your partner requires *your help in that suit*, then change to the suit in which your partner next requires your help. This happens frequently when playing against a suit declaration. You have led up to Dummy's weakness, and your partner has made a trick with the King. He may or may not have the Ace. If he leads another suit and puts you in, try him for yet another suit in which Dummy is weak. He does not require your help to make his Ace if he has it, but he may require your help to make a King or a Queen. The principle is that when your partner is marked with the master card of a suit, he does not need your assistance to make it. Therefore, try him in another suit.

Of course, this principle, like most others in Bridge, has its exceptions. Where it is a question of saving the game, and where Declarer may get discards of losing cards, it is right to make all the tricks as quickly as you can. But where, from the situation and play of the cards, it is obvious this is not the case, this rule should be observed. Its imperfect appreciation is a constant cause of the loss of tricks. Your partner is in such a hurry for you to make a trick with which you are marked that he puts you into the lead, and you have to lead away from a suit headed by K, J, in which you would have made a trick if he had led it.

A point that is often missed is that it is frequently good to lead up to an Ace in Dummy when the Ace is accompanied only by small cards.

It is your lead. You hold 10, 5, 3 of Clubs. In Dummy are A, 6, 4, 2. The lead of the 10 may be very useful. Suppose your partner holds K, J, 8, it may enable him to make two tricks in the suit. In any case, leading up to an Ace and small ones seldom does any harm, and often means getting rid of the Ace cheaply. And yet many players are afraid to do it. It is different where Dummy holds a guarded King. To lead up to this is generally a

mistake. If your partner has the Ace, he must establish the King, whereas, if you don't lead the suit, Declarer is left in doubt as to where the Ace lies, and he may not make his King at all. The worst lead you can make as a rule is to lead up to Dummy's guarded Queen when you hold Ace, Jack, and others of the suit. Unless your partner has the King, it means that Declarer will win two tricks in the suit where he may make only one if you do not lead it.

When you lead up to Dummy's weakness, lead if possible a card higher than the highest held in Dummy. It may help your partner and embarrass Declarer.

Leading through strength sounds simple enough, but there are a few points about it which are sometimes overlooked. When Dummy has a solid suit, it may be well, rather than to lead from a guarded King or Queen suit, to throw the lead into Dummy in preference to leading up to the unknown. But with broken strength in Dummy (say a suit headed by K, J, or K, 10) it is often wise to lead through it and give your partner a chance. But beware of leading through a long suit in Dummy which can be established with the loss of a single trick, unless Dummy has no other cards of re-entry. Then it may be profitable to *kill* the suit at an early stage. Thus, in Dummy are—♣—A, Q, J, 10, 8, 5. You hold three little ones. You suspect your partner holds the King. It is most dangerous to lead the suit if Dummy has one or more cards of re-entry as, when trumps are drawn, the suit may all be good.

Many players have an idea that it is necessary and right to return their partner's lead as soon as they get it. Playing against a suit declaration, this is an erroneous notion. Unless you have reason to suppose your partner has led a singleton, do not return his lead immediately. If you have an A, K suit of your own, show him that suit by leading out the King. Then lead up to weakness on the table. It is only when playing against a No Trumper that you should return your partner's suit immediately, however unpromising it looks. The only exception is when you can save the game in your own hand by establishing a suit of your own.

Suppose your partner opened with the 5 of Diamonds—his fourth best. Dummy exposes A, J, 7. You hold K, 6, 3.

You win with the King. Now, if you return the Diamond you are going straight up to the tenace, and Dummy must make both his Ace and Jack. Nevertheless, failing a better suit in your hand, it is your duty to return your partner's lead. If he has two cards of re-entry he will be able to make his remaining Diamonds. It must, therefore, be understood that the remarks about leading up to weakness apply mainly to the suit game and not to No Trumps. Here it may be necessary to lead up to strength. For, as a rule, every fresh suit opened by the opponents when playing against No Trumps is of benefit to the Declarer.

The Eleven Rule

The Eleven Rule, the invention of Mr. R. F. Foster, the American writer, comes to us from the days of Whist.

Its use is when your partner makes a blind lead of the fourth best card of his longest suit at No Trumps. When a player leads his fourth best card, the value of the card led is deducted from eleven, and the remainder gives the number of cards higher than the one led which are not in the leader's hand.

Thus the six of Clubs is led by A ; partner holds ♣—Q, 9, 4 ; Dummy has ♣—J, 8, 2. By applying the Eleven Rule, partner knows that the Declarer holds only one card higher than the six. As he has made a "No Trump" declaration, the obvious deduction is that the card higher is either the Ace or King of the suit. Therefore, unless Dummy has played the Jack, third hand should not put up his Queen on the trick.

This rule is often a great help in defensive play. When a card is led subtract it from eleven, and by noticing the cards in Dummy you can often force a high card cheaply from the Declarer.

If the card led is a very low card it will not help you much, but the lead of a card higher than a five often enables you to finesse to advantage.

Defenders' Play

It is in defensive play that most mistakes are made. Many

who bid well and play the joint hands will fail woefully in defence. I do not suppose that any of us realise how many points we throw away in the course of the year by bad defensive play. To save games is just as important as to win them. We remember the rubbers we have won and lost, but we forget those we might have saved.

The criterion of the good Bridge-player is in defence. If you watch a first-class practitioner you may be a little disappointed by his methods of bidding and play of the joint hands. You may expect to see a brilliant pyrotechnic display, some wonderful coups, or dazzling exhibitions of skill.

Occasionally such things may happen, but, more often than not, the chief impression you will receive is of soundness and safety rather than of exceptional brilliance.

But if you are a close observer and watch good players at work against the declaration, you will often be astounded at the results. You will see games saved that it seemed impossible to save. You will see unlikely tricks made, and you will sometimes see what appears a certain winning position of the attacker turned into a losing one.

I am not, of course, alluding to smashing hands. Any fool can play when he has all the cards. I have known indifferent players tremendously elated by winning a few rubbers off "cracks." It would be unkind to disillusion them, and tell them that it is not *they* who have won, but the *cards*. Against the cards the expert toils in vain. All his skill, all his knowledge cannot beat them. But when you come to the ordinary hands as apart from the cast-iron hands, how often you find that the extra trick or two, which means the difference between making or missing game, is the result not of the good play of the Declarer, but of the bad play of the Defenders.

Of course, the attacker has a considerable advantage. After he has seen Dummy he can plan the game as he wishes. He has a single command. His adversaries have no information of their collective strength or weakness, and can only deduce it from the bidding or discover it as the game progresses.

The Declarer has, in fact, an advantage of one or two tricks over his adversaries.

But if they are more skilful than he, that advantage may be reduced so that they play on equal terms.

Study the art of defensive play. It is an art, and a very fine art. It is where Whist-players excel. At Whist there is no Dummy to help you, and the deal, with its turned-up trump, is no advantage. Attackers and defenders are not marked at the outset. All the finest Bridge-players I know are old Whist-players, and have had their grounding in defensive play.

New-comers to Auction Bridge lack that valuable training. They learn the bidding, and the offensive, but they miss the subtle points of the defensive. The loss of a single trick by the defenders is usually more expensive than the loss of a trick by the attacker.

We all have experience at Bridge of the players who take no interest in the game when they hold bad hands. They play their cards listlessly or carelessly, with the idea that it cannot matter what they do, and sometimes they betray by their manner the fact that they hold bad hands.

This is a great mistake. Not only does it give an advantage to the Declarer in his play, but it is unfair to the partner, whose hand may not be so bad.

The first point, then, I would make is : *No hand is so bad that it does not matter how you play it.*

Suppose your hand is an absolute Yarborough, with no suit longer than four and no card higher than a nine. Well, it may seem a hopeless proposition, not a possible trick in it anywhere. But don't play it carelessly on that account. Watch the game, and take just as much interest in it as if you had a good hand. There is always a possibility that your despised nine may make, and, anyway, do not give the show away by exhibiting boredom.

Weapons of Defence

The chief weapons in defensive play are (1) Deduction from the bidding and the play of Declarer, (2) the leads, (3) signals, (4) discards, (5) forcing, (6) blocking.

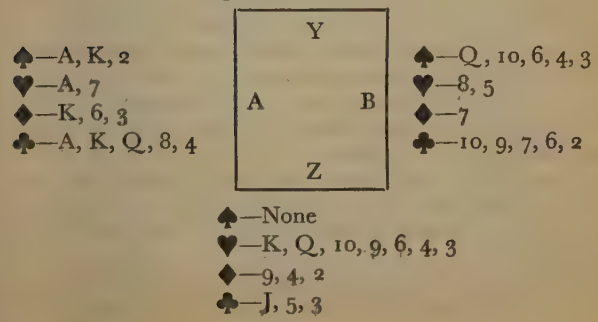
I have already dealt with deductions which can be made by the Declarer and opponents alike from the bidding. The great point is to apply these swiftly in defence.

It is not only the Declarer who profits by reading the cards. In defence it is an all-important matter. Take this case : Z bids " One Club," and eventually secures the declaration at three Clubs. In the course of the game he plays two Aces—say, the Ace of Clubs and Ace of Spades. If A has no Ace and there is no Ace in Dummy, A can be practically *certain* that B has the two red Aces. Why ? Because if Z had held three Aces he would have called " No Trumps " rather than Clubs. This inference will affect A's play and show him what to lead. Instances of this nature are occurring constantly, and frequently a player fails to size up the situation through omitting to apply the simple inference that Z cannot have three Aces.

In defence it is often a case of " the little more and how much it is, the little less and what worlds away ! "

One false step proves a whole hand's undoing.

The following interesting example illustrates how much depends upon defensive play.



Score : game all. Y dealt, and bid " One Diamond " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " Two Hearts " ; A, " Two No Trumps " ; Y, " Three Hearts " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " No bid " ; A, " Three No Trumps " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Four Hearts " ; A, " Four No Trumps " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Five Hearts " ; A, " Five No Trumps " ; Y, " Six Hearts " ; B and Z, " No bid " ; A, " Double." All pass.

I give the bidding as it occurred. Majority bidding was being played, as you will notice by the fact that Y was able to bid six Hearts over five No Trumps. It is undoubtedly forward. All the bidders were flag-flying, and the only backward caller was B, who never showed his Spades.

Y's raise of Hearts twice was not sound on his holding, but both he and his partner considered the rubber was gone if played in No Trumps, in which surmise they were quite correct.

A had also no ground for thinking he could make four or five No Trumps. With a Diamond opening he could be fairly sure of nine tricks. But when once Hearts were mentioned he was unlikely to get a Diamond opening. The bidding, therefore, is not put forward as an example of soundness, but what actually occurs amongst average players in rubber game.

The point of the example is not, however, in the bidding, but in the play. You will see from an examination of the hands that there is a remote possibility of Z making his contract, but only by bad play on the part of A.

In actual fact A made this bad play, and Z obtained a contract which he should never have achieved.

This is how the game went : A opened with the King of Spades, which Z trumped.

Z led his King of Hearts, on which A played the Ace, returning another Heart, which Z took in his own hand. This finished the proceedings for A and B. They never made another trick.

Z led the 9 of Diamonds and ran it. A's King was caught on the third round, and Z discarded his three losing Clubs

on the winning Diamonds, and made his six Hearts, little slam, game, and rubber.

Now look at the other side, and see how correct play on the part of A must save the position—not because you know how all the cards lie, but by intelligent deduction on the part of A.

The initial lead of King of Spades by A was quite sound. It was better for him, so far as he knew, to open his short Spade suit rather than his long Club suit. But, having done so and Z leading King of Hearts at trick two, A should never have been foolish enough to put up his Ace of Hearts, or, having put it up, to continue playing Hearts. With six solid Diamonds over him he ought to have realised the danger. His play was to let the King of Hearts make. In that case Z was in a very awkward position. If he continues Hearts he knows that A B can make three Clubs against him. His only chance is to go for a ruff in Clubs. This he can do only once, and he must be two down on his contract.

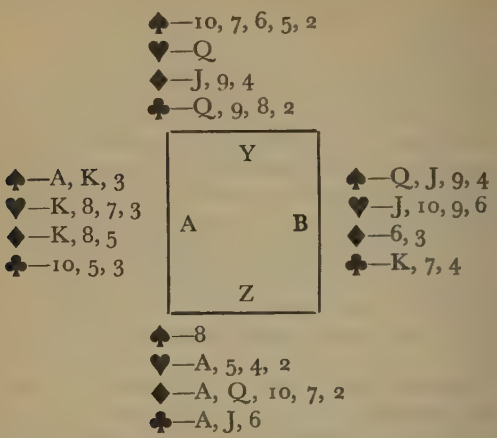
The position for Z after the first trick was intriguing. He had alternative lines of play. He could go for two ruffs in Clubs, in which case he must be one down on his contract, losing eventually one Heart and one Club. Or he could take the bold course which he took, actually hoping for bad play by his opponents.

Who would not take the possibility of game with 48 + 50 + 50 as against a sure loss of 100, even though failure might mean the loss of another 100?

Z adopted the bold course, which succeeded.

A's double of six Hearts looked cast-iron. Most players would have doubled "Five Hearts" instead of risking "Five No Trumps." But A probably realised there was something freakish about. With a Diamond opening he would actually make "Five No Trumps." But with a Heart opening he could not make more than four, provided Y kept his Spade guard. Y's discards on the long Club suit would have been very difficult, and it is quite possible that on any opening A might have made "Five No Trumps."

Here is another example which for sheer ineptitude in defence requires some beating. Yet the players were regular Club practitioners.



Score : game all. Z dealt and called " One No Trump." All passed. A opened the King of Spades, on which B played the 9 ; A then led the 3 of Clubs, on which Z played Dummy's 8 ; B played the King which fell to Z's Ace. Z then led the Queen of Diamonds, which A took with the King. A led a small Heart, won by Dummy's Queen. Z then put himself in with a Club, making four tricks in that suit, and then played out his Diamonds. A finally make his King of Hearts and Ace of Spades.

It would be difficult to find a worse-played hand on the part of A. He had not only the saving of the game easily, but might have defeated the contract. A's initial lead of Spades to have a " look round " was bad. He should have opened his longest suit. Having, however, opened Spades, he should have read his partner's 9 as a call. It should have been obvious, at any rate later, to A that Z had not got the Q, J, or he would have gone for clearing the Spades. The

lead of a small Club from three to the 10 was also bad. But worst of all was the lead of a small Heart with the Queen bare on the table.

A, if he led the suit at all, must lead the King. The play is an illustration of the mistake of chopping and changing suits against a No Trumper.

Signals

I find that many players who understand the use of the signal of the play of first a high and then a low card when you wish to ruff, or the same signal known as the Echo to show four or more cards of the suit when playing against a No Trumper, do not seem to understand the use of the same signal as an encouraging card.

I remember a club-player who was quite angry with me because I played an unnecessarily high card on his first lead of the King, followed by a low card on his Ace. When he led a third card of the suit and I followed to the trick, which was trumped by the Declarer, he turned on me angrily.

" What do you mean," he said, " by deceiving me ? You played high low, and I therefore thought you could ruff the third round of the suit."

" Not at all," I replied. " I played an encouraging card because I wanted you to go on with the suit."

" Encouraging card, encouraging card ! I have never heard of such a thing. I understand ' petering ' and the Echo, but I don't know what you mean by an encouraging card."

Well, an encouraging card is what the Americans call the " come on " signal. It shows your partner that you wish him to continue the suit. The fact that he may think you are going to ruff does not matter at all, so long as he obeys the signal. You have your own reasons for wishing the suit continued.

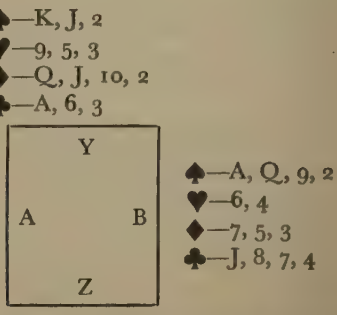
This was the situation which disturbed my partner. Spades are trumps, and A leads the King of Clubs. Dummy puts down ♣—J, 9, 6, 5 ; B holds ♣—Q, 10, 8, 4, and four little Spades.

When A leads the King of Clubs B is anxious that he should continue the suit, as he is over Dummy, and wishes

the Declarer to be forced. He therefore plays the 8 on the King led, and the 4 on the Ace. At trick three Dummy plays the 9 and B plays the 10, which the Declarer trumps—according to plan. It happened that this play gave A B an extra trick, as Declarer had only five trumps. The point to notice is that, if at trick one the 4 of Clubs is played, the leader is left in doubt as to whether to continue the suit or not. He does not know where the Q, 10 are, and if he goes on with the Ace, and Declarer holds Queen, he may establish two tricks in the suit for Declarer. The play of the 8 by his partner on the first trick assures him that it is safe to continue the suit. He may think it the higher of two, or even possibly a singleton. But he *knows* it is all right to go on in either case, and the fact that he may be misled temporarily does not matter in the least.

A good player in this situation, if the partner throws the 4 on his first lead of the King, will not go on with the suit, as it looks too dangerous. This is where the play of an encouraging card in a suit bid is so helpful.

It is generally accepted that an encouraging card is the voluntary discard of a card higher than a seven. This single discard indicates that the player wishes his partner to open the suit from which such discard is made. Here is an example :

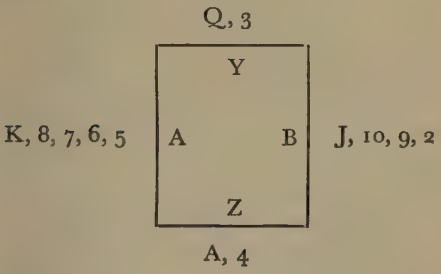


Z is playing the hand in Hearts. A leads the King of Clubs, and the trick is taken with the Ace in Dummy. Z

now leads three winning rounds of Hearts. On the third round B should discard his 9 of Spades. This encourages A when he gets in to lead Spades.

Against a No Trumper the discard of a high card is particularly useful as an indication to partner how the cards lie.

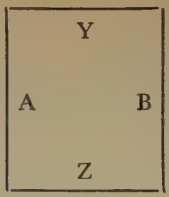
Take this case :



Z is playing a No Trumper. A leads the 6 of his suit. Z puts up the Queen in Dummy as being the only chance for it to make, and B plays the encouraging 10. If A regains the lead he will play another low card of the suit, reading B for a card higher than the 10 played to the first trick. Whereas if B on the 6 led plays the 2, A is left in doubt as to the position of the 10 and Jack, and will not like to continue the suit, as he might reasonably infer that Z had A, J.

Good Defensive Play

As an example of good defensive play the following hand illustrates two important points. The advantage of forcing Declarer in trumps, and the necessity of taking a risk and discarding a winner when by so doing is the only chance of saving the game.



♠—A, 8, 7, 5, 3
♥—10, 9, 5
♦—K, Q
♣—5, 3, 2

♠—K, 6
♥—8, 7, 6
♦—6, 5, 4, 3, 2
♣—9, 8, 4

Score : game all. A B 8 in rubber game. Z deals, and says, " No bid " ; A, " Two Hearts " ; Y, " Three Clubs " ; B, " Three Hearts " ; all pass.

The play was as follows :

Trick 1.—Y leads King of Clubs. All follow suit.

Trick 2.—Y leads Queen of Clubs. All follow suit.

Trick 3.—Y leads Jack of Clubs. B and Z follow. A trumps with the 4 of Hearts.

Tricks 4 and 5.—A leads Ace and then King of Hearts. All follow suit.

Trick 6.—A leads Queen of Hearts, Y plays 7 of Clubs, and B and Z follow suit.

Trick 7.—A leads 7 of Diamonds, Y plays the Ace, B the Queen, and Z the 2.

Trick 8—Y leads Ace of Clubs, B discards 3 of Spades, Z 3 of Diamonds, and A trumps with Jack of Hearts.

Trick 9.—A leads 8 of Diamonds, Y plays the Jack. B wins with the King, and Z plays the 4.

(*Note.*—Y, having played the Jack, is marked with no more Diamonds, and A is therefore marked by Z with the 10 and 9, and his two other cards must be Spades. Y can only remain with four Spades, the Heart and Club suits having been all played out.)

Trick 10 (This is A's seventh trick. If he wins two more tricks he goes game).—A leads the Ace of Spades from Dummy. On it Z plays *his King*. A plays the 2, and Y the 4.

This trick is the crux of the position. If Z plays his 6 of Spades on the Ace he must win the next trick with the King and be compelled to lead a Diamond, which will give A the two tricks he requires to make contract and game. By throwing the King of Spades he takes the risk that A has not got the Queen. A, of course, may have the Queen, in which case Z does not save the game by playing the King on the Ace, but loses an additional trick which he could have saved. That, however, is of small importance compared with the chance of saving the game.

If he plays his small Spade on the Ace led, the *game is lost for a certainty*. There is a chance, and a good chance, of saving it if Y holds the Queen. A's second Spade, whether it is J, 10, or 9, must fall to the Queen, and Y could make the last three tricks as there is nothing higher than the 8 in Dummy.

In fact, Y held originally ♠—Q, J, 9, 4, and Declarer 10, 2 ; and the game was not only saved by Z's play, but A was two down on his contract.

Now when this is all set forth you may not think Z did anything wonderful. But how many players would have reasoned this out and promptly played the King on the Ace led ?

Forcing the Weak Hand

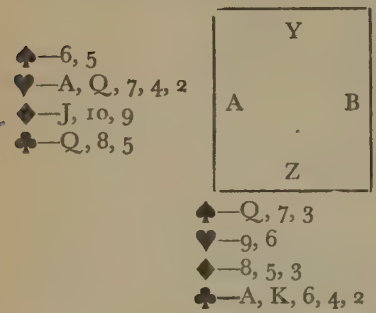
One of the excellent maxims inherited from Whist is "Force the Strong Hand, Never the Weak." Its application at Bridge is usually to play against Dummy. As a rule Dummy is the weak hand, especially in a trump declaration.

Playing against a trump suit, it is obvious that usually it is a mistake to force Dummy to trump a suit of which he is bare, if it can possibly be avoided. This is particularly the case if the lead in question gives Declarer a chance of ruffing in Dummy and discarding from his own hand.

Frequently Declarer's great desire is to use Dummy's trumps for ruffing purposes, and the best way to defeat him is to lead trumps. But, in common with many other good maxims, the rule about *never* forcing the weaker hand has many exceptions. Occasions arise, not infrequently, when

it is not only advisable to force Dummy to trump, but when it is the only way of saving the game. These situations are often missed, even by seasoned players. We all have experience of games where saving or losing turns upon a particular lead at a certain point. One incorrect lead spoils the whole defensive campaign.

To illustrate my meaning take the following case :



The bidding has been : Z, " One Club " ; A, " One Heart " ; Y, " One Spade." All pass.

B opens with the King of Hearts, and follows with the 8. The second trick is taken by A with the Queen. What should A lead now ? On the right lead may hang the issue whether A B save the game or not.

The obvious lead would be the Jack of Diamonds up to Dummy's weakness. But consider the bidding for a moment. It is unlikely that B holds A, K or A, Queen of Diamonds. Otherwise with King of Hearts he would probably have raised the Heart bid. It is possible he may have King or Ace of Diamonds, and he may have a trick in Spades. If so, the game will be saved.

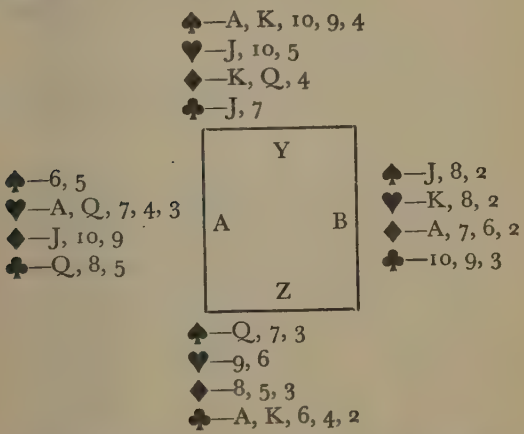
But supposing B has no stopper in Spades but three little ones only, and one trick in Diamonds, the game will not be saved if Y is able to establish Clubs while he still holds Queen of Spades as entry in Dummy.

Therefore the very best lead, in so far as it can do no harm

and may do good, is the Ace of Hearts at trick three. Y, you will observe, is marked with a Heart, as B's second lead was the 8 and not the Jack. If A leads the Ace of Hearts and forces Dummy, he deprives Dummy of the card of re-entry for the long Clubs, provided B holds three Spades. The lead of the Heart forces Dummy to ruff, and it may deprive Dummy of an essential re-entry.

If at trick three A leads a Diamond and B wins the trick and returns a Diamond, Y would go game by ruffing the third Club, and returning to Dummy on the third round of trumps, and making two Club tricks.

The four hands were :



Be on the look-out for a similar situation. When you see a long suit in Dummy which may be established, try to remove at an early stage of the game the likely re-entry.

The Discard

No universal precepts about discards can be formulated, because each hand must be judged on its own merits, and your discard must be governed by common sense, and not

by hard and fast rules. How often does it happen, for instance, that you have to keep a guard to a Queen or a Jack, or even to a 10, to prevent a long suit being made against you. A discard from that suit would be fatal, and equally fatal, perhaps, would be the lead of it by your partner.

In the ordinary way the first discard should be from your weak suit which you do not want your partner to lead to you. This rule applies equally when there are trumps and when there are No Trumps.

It is also universally recognised that if you throw a high card, a 7 or higher, of a suit, you are calling in that suit and want it led. If only one card can be discarded, the fact that it is a high card is sufficient indication. But if two discards are possible, you complete the signal by throwing a low card after the higher card.

The great objection to this form of discard is that it is often too expensive, as it may involve, when playing against a No Trumper, throwing away a trick or two tricks to get a suit led.

Another difficulty about the discard is that you may in the course of the game want to alter the request made by your original discard. The development of the game as it advances may show that you can make only one trick, which is jeopardised unless your partner leads you the suit before the adversary gets in. To make my meaning clear, suppose you are playing against a No Trumper and you hold the Ace of Hearts in your hand, and the King of Clubs guarded and the Ace of Clubs is exposed in Dummy. You may at an early stage of the game ask for a Club to be led through Dummy, with the reasonable expectation of making the King as well as the Ace of Hearts. But if the Declarer is making a long suit on which he is throwing Hearts you may never make the Ace of Hearts unless your partner leads the suit, so you discard a high Heart and then a lower one, by which you say to your partner, " I withdraw my request for a Club and I now ask you to lead a Heart."

Only I would beg of you when you want a suit led and are playing with a mediocre and inattentive partner, *shout*, *do not whisper*. It is of no use discarding first a 3 and then

a 2. He will not notice it. But if you discard a 10 and then a 3 it is possible he will sit up and take notice.

It is necessary often to make a protective discard in order to deceive the adversary. Thus in Dummy are ♦—A, J, 5, 2. You sit on the left of Dummy and hold only two small Diamonds in your hand. On no account discard a Diamond, as that will show the Declarer on which side he can take a finesse. Of course, if the Declarer has not the King, the only way for him to finesse is against your partner ; but if he has K and 10 your discard will have shown him how the Queen can probably be caught, with the result of losing what may be a very important trick. This is a point often missed by weak players.

The aim of your discards should be (1) to help your partner in reading the contents of your hand, (2) to do as little harm as possible to your partner's hand, if you cannot help him actively by your discard, (3) to deceive the Declarer.

As a general rule it is not wise to make a false discard unless you have reason to believe that your partner cannot win another trick and that you can save the position without any assistance. Then a false discard may be useful. But to play false cards at other periods of the game is bad Bridge, because if your partner never knows whether you are telling the truth or not it is impossible for him to know what to do when he finds himself in a tight corner.

Never leave yourself bare of a suit when by so doing you will inform the Declarer where all the cards of it lie.

Forcing Discards

A point about discards that is insufficiently appreciated by numerous players is the advantage the Declarer has in making his adversaries discard to a long suit. This helps him in two ways. First, it frequently enables him to place unseen cards ; and, secondly, it may force the opponents to unguard suits, and even throw away winners. Impatient players frequently do not avail themselves of this advantage.

To play out a long string of " volunteers " may seem poor fun. But putting them to the torture of the discard is most effective against weak or inattentive adversaries, while

situations arise where, no matter how good the defence, the Declarer can force his enemies into a losing position.

In a suit declaration with a long string of winning trumps it is often advisable to play out two or three rounds after the adversaries have been exhausted, with a view to watching their discards. You will frequently find that both adversaries protect the same suit and end by losing tricks in a suit that they might have kept guarded. Or you may get their winners to crash or fall together.

I remember a case of this where Declarer, playing a contract of three Hearts, after making seven tricks, was left with the following cards : ♥—10, 9, 8, 7 ; ♦—Q, J. The Diamonds were not winners, and it looked like a certainty that he must lose both of them. But instead of throwing his cards and taking his four Hearts, he led three more rounds of Hearts, forcing discards. Then he led his Queen of Diamonds, on which A played the King. B had discarded all but the Ace, which had to overtake the King. Consequently, Declarer made a little slam—a gain of 58 points—by forcing discards.

A case of frequent occurrence is where a player holds Jack and two little ones. He does not regard his Jack as a guard, and discards a little one, with fatal results.

Suppose his partner has Queen and one other, that Jack is a guard in the suit, and the retention of a little one may make all the difference between losing or saving the game.

Hands from play illustrating the discard are given in the chapter on " Actualities."

Holding up an Ace

In the chapter on "Declarer's Play" I dealt with the subject of holding up an Ace.

Now for the position of the defenders when they have the Ace of Declarer's long suit.

It is an elementary proposition, when there is a long suit in Dummy, that the defenders should hold up the Ace as long as possible to prevent Declarer establishing it. This applies *always* when Dummy has no card of re-entry.

The reason is obvious. You can " kill " Dummy's long

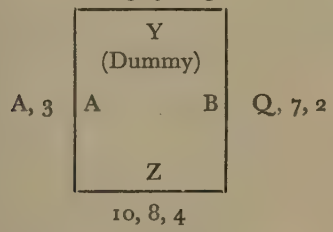
suit if you can hold it up. By the time it is established Declarer cannot get in to make the remaining winning tricks.

But when there is a card of re-entry, or more than one card of re-entry, it may also be advisable to hold up. In the case of only one card of re-entry, it is nearly always right to hold up the Ace, because, in order to get in, the Declarer has to use Dummy's high card, which may be to the advantage of the defenders.

Where there are two cards of re-entry, it may be a doubtful proposition. When Dummy is as strong as that you may " go to bed " with your Ace if you do not make it when you can. Your judgment on this must depend upon the contents of your own hand and the way declarer and your partner are playing the cards.

The real difficulty comes in when you hold Ace and one other only of the long suit held in Dummy. Should you play your Ace first round ? You will have to play it on second round in any case. Are there any principles to guide you ? I think there are. You should play your Ace on an honour led when you hold only two of the suit. Sometimes it may turn out badly, but, more often than not, it is sound play.

Take this example :

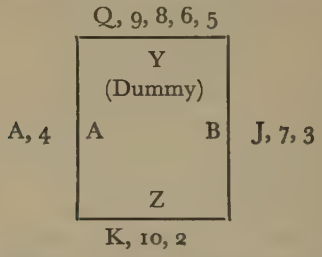


Z leads the 10. It is better you should play your Ace at once. B holds the suit guarded.

Probably, if you don't play your Ace, Z will run the 10 and B will make his Queen, and you and he will make two tricks in the suit. But that is not the point. If you play the Ace on the 10, B effectively blocks the suit if King is played

second time. In any case, you are no worse off, unless B holds the Queen single, or Queen and one only. In the second position you are probably no worse off, as Z may finesse the Jack on second round and B still make his Queen.

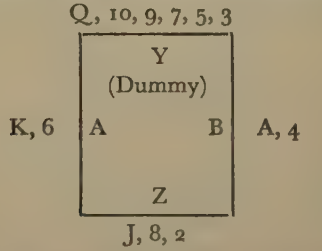
A position that occurs constantly is this :



Z leads the King, and A (seeing five of the suit in Dummy) passes it up, with the result that the Ace falls on second round. In this position A *must* put up the Ace on first round and hope his partner has the Jack. The hold-up is bad and useless, and yet it is often made.

Even if you have the Ace and two small ones, you should play the Ace, as it is quite possible that your partner holds Jack and two others.

Then there is the crash ! I have seen this take place through mistaken ideas on the part of opponents :



Z leads the Jack. A plays the 6 because he does not want to clear the suit for Z. B, with the same idea, plays the 4.

Z continues the suit, and A and B's King and Ace fall together.

Both A and B are actuated by the laudable desire of holding up the suit, but their deductions are entirely wrong.

A may be right in holding up his King for two reasons. First of all, he realises that B probably has the Ace, and it may be bare, and therefore he does not want to play his King. Secondly, he may desire B to get in to lead him his suit and keep his King as a card of re-entry.

The real sinner in this case is B. He should know that Z (unless he is a very bad player) cannot hold the King. For it is a well-known rule that when you want high cards to fall you lead high cards. Z, therefore, if he held the King, *must* lead it in the hope of drawing the Ace.

When he leads the Jack it should be evident that this is not a case of false carding, and that Z cannot hold the King. Therefore, B must play his Ace at once. I find that even experienced club players go wrong in this position, because they have not thought it out.

Crash tactics are frequently successful because the sound idea of holding up an Ace is often so misapplied.

Of course, the situation is often obscured by the fact that Declarer will play false cards whenever he can, and so deceive the adversaries. It is sometimes extremely difficult to know when to hold up an Ace and when to play it on first or second round. When holding three or four cards of a suit it is nearly always right to hold up the Ace, unless you are in a position to lead at once your partner's established suit, with the certainty of saving the game or defeating the contract. It has always to be remembered that Declarer may try to snatch a trick early in the play, relying upon an opponent holding up an Ace. This is a ruse against which you should be on your guard.

Opponents have made three tricks, and Declarer is in the lead. He can see two by cards, but he cannot see a certainty of game. He knows, but the opponents do not know, that as soon as they get in they can save the game. So he tries to snatch a trick before they realise the position. This trick is often made by opponents holding up an Ace.

The most common method is when Declarer holds K, J of a suit, and Dummy holds Queen to four with no card of entry. Declarer leads his Jack, and A, who holds the Ace to three, passes it, thinking his partner may hold the King. The trick wins, and Z then abandons the suit and proceeds to make game, whereas, if A had put up his Ace at once and led his partner's suit, game would have been saved.

CHAPTER III

Mathematics that Matter

Mathematicians live in a world of propositions that can be applied to anything, to diamonds or penny buns or rays in the ether. They prove that if something happens to be true then something else must be true, not caring much either way. One of the very eminent has written : " Mathematics is the subject in which we never know what we are talking about, and don't care whether it is true."

But all the same a certain amount of mathematical knowledge is necessary for good play. Mathematics can tell us a lot of interesting facts about the millions of hands a player can hold and the quadrillions of different ways in which the pack can be dealt to all four players, the frequency with which different types of hands are to be expected, and the probabilities of certain distributions of Aces and honours, and of long and short suits.

But there is little that mathematics can teach us in the serious business of winning points that our common sense would not lead us to expect.

The mathematical idea of the value of an " expectation " should be understood. The expectation in any undertaking is the sum of all possible results, positive or negative, each multiplied by the probability of that result being achieved. The good player always plays so that his expectation is a maximum.

One of the most important facts showed by analysis is that the value of winning the first or second game is 125 points, but of the third game (if there be one) is 250 points. If the laws as to scoring had been drafted so that the winner of each of the first two games scored 125 above the line and 250 for the third game, the fact would be better brought home to the player.

The final result of any rubber is, of course, exactly the same under these conditions, and, in fact, the principle is admitted by Law 60 which allows 125 points to the winner of a game in an unfinished rubber.

In consequence, the conditions are different according to which game is being played. The importance of winning the game in proportion to the points for tricks and honours is twice as much in the third as in either of the previous games.

This has an important bearing both on the bidding and the play of the hand. In the first or second game it is worth being penalised 150 or even 200 points, getting something in return for honours, rather than allowing the opponents a certain game worth 125 points with extras for tricks and honours.

Also it is better business to penalise the opponents even only 100 points than push on with a bid that offers no chance of game.

But in the third game bigger figures must be considered. Three hundred points is not too much to be penalised rather than let opponents win a certain game. On the other hand, no reasonable hope of going game should be sacrificed unless it is sure that opponents can be left three tricks short if doubled.

Similarly in the play of the hand, in any game it is worth while to risk a finesse which if successful will mean game, and if unsuccessful will mean being one or two tricks short of contract. Say that in the first game, at love all, Declarer is playing three Hearts and he sees that his contract is assured, but that by a successful finesse he could make four tricks, while a failure would leave him two tricks short. If it is a question of a King being on one side or the other, both equally likely, he has half a chance of four tricks and game, 157 points gained, and half a chance of 100 points lost. His net expectation is therefore half of 57 or 28½ points to the good. On the other hand, if he refuses to try the finesse, he has a certainty of 24 points for his three tricks. By trying the finesse he is playing with the bigger expectation, and this is the proper line of play.

The proceeds from honours will be the same in either case.

But in the third game, when 250 points are at stake, bigger risks can properly be taken. If it is clear that the only way in which game can be won depends upon a somewhat improbable distribution of the adverse cards, such as a high card being a singleton, then the hand should be played assuming that this distribution is the case, even at the risk of a substantial set-back.

These are the points, the pros and cons, which Declarer must study directly Dummy's hand is exposed. Bearing in mind whether or not he is playing a third game, he must plan his campaign accordingly.

He will see how many certain tricks he has, and must look for methods by which he might make game, if game be possible. He needs to know what suits he can expect to clear by dropping adverse cards, or establish by suitable leads from the right hand, leaving the necessary entries in either hand ; whether he must immediately clear trumps or first use some in ruffing, at the same time guarding against adverse ruffs ; whether and in what direction finesses must be taken ; what must be done first, and what can be left for decision later when the play of the cards has given him a fuller insight into the distribution of the adverse cards in the opponents' hands.

It is not only the Declarer who has much to study when Dummy's hand goes down ; the opponents also get an inkling of the quick tricks that Declarer must hold, and the probable distribution of suits between Declarer and his own partner.

At this stage, mathematics has something to teach which is not perfectly obvious ; it relates to the most probable distribution of the remaining cards, not in sight, between the unseen hands. Calculation is made on the basis of a certain number of cards of some suit to be distributed, without consideration of what the cards are ; but extension can be made to deal with a particular card. For example, if the chance of K, x, x, x, being distributed 3 and 1 is .60, then the chance of the King being a singleton is .15, and of the King being twice guarded is .45.

Tables have been given showing the probabilities of these various distribution of unseen cards, but on the assumption that nothing whatever is known of the constitution of the unseen hands. But this is a condition that does not hold in practice. Even if there has been no adverse bidding, the very first card led gives information about some suit, often quite enough to settle definitely the whole distribution of the suit as far as numbers of cards is concerned ; witness an original lead of a 2 against a " No Trump " bid, which shows only four of the suit, and also the certainty that the leader has no five suit at all. It would seem to be more useful to start from a point when, let us say, there are about nine unknown cards in each unseen hand. At this stage the position is shown by the following table of the percentages in which different divisions are to be expected :

Three cards divide 2 and 1 = 79 per cent. ; 3 and 0 = 21 per cent.

Four cards divide 2 and 2 = 42 per cent. ; 3 and 1 = 50 per cent. ; 4 and 0 = 8 per cent.

Five cards divide 3 and 2 = 71 per cent. ; 4 and 1 = 26 per cent. ; 5 and 0 = 3 per cent.

Six cards divide 3 and 3 = 38 per cent. ; 4 and 2 = 49 per cent. ; 5 and 1 = 12 per cent. ; 6 and 0 = 1 per cent.

Seven cards divide 4 and 3 = 67 per cent. ; 5 and 2 = 29 per cent. ; 6 and 1 = 4 per cent.

Eight cards divide 4 and 4 = 36 per cent. ; 5 and 3 = 48 per cent. ; 6 and 2 = 14 per cent. ; 7 and 1 = 2 per cent.

This tells us all that we want to know as to the prospects of clearing a suit, and from it we can deduce a useful rule of thumb—viz. that if in some suit there is an *odd* number of cards outstanding, 7, 5, or 3, then it is more than two to one in *favour* of their being divided 4 and 3, 3 and 2, or 2 and 1 respectively. If, however, there is an *even* number, 8, 6, or 4, then it is nearly two to one *against* their being divided equally 4 and 4, 3 and 3, or 2 and 2 ; on the other

hand, it is a level chance that the division will be 5 and 3, 4 and 2, or 3 and 1.

You must not be influenced as to probable distribution of outstanding cards by the distribution between your own hand and that of Dummy ; if you have eight Spades in sight it is immaterial whether all eight are in one hand, or whether they are divided 4 and 4 ; it is at least two to one on that the other five Spades are divided 3 and 2. It is an old myth, unsupported by any evidence from experience, that because one hand is a freak the other hands are likely to be freaks.

Uneven distributions being the more probable, even with an even number of outstanding cards, it can be taken that the larger share must be expected in the hand about which less is known. It may be that A is marked with at least 9 Hearts and Diamonds, having obviously bid a two suiter, and therefore only a possible 4 cards in other suits, whereas B's Hearts and Diamonds cannot be more than 5, leaving 8 possible Spades and Clubs. In that case, if 4 outstanding Clubs have to be placed, they must be expected to lie 3 with B and 1 with A. Also it follows that some particular card of the suit whose position it is important to know is more likely to be found in the hand in which it is expected to find the greater number of that suit.

Finessing

Take the matter of finessing, about which even experienced players have very hazy notions.

When and how is it better to finesse ?

Roughly, the chance of clearing a suit in two rounds is :

With three outstanding cards four to one on.

With four outstanding cards three to two against.

And in three rounds :

With four outstanding cards eleven to one on.

With five outstanding cards seven to three on.

With six outstanding cards seven to four against.

Now, suppose you hold a trump suit which you wish to clear as promptly as possible, having a reasonable number of entries in other suits in either hand for the purpose.

Each particular division of cards between you and your partner constitutes a special problem of which an exact analysis involves a lot of work.

Here are some actual results of analysis in which deep finesses are worth considering.

Z has A, Q, 10, 8, 2 of trumps ; Y has 6, 5, 4, 3 ; so that four cards, the K, J, 9, 7, are distributed between A and B.

If Z plays the suit straight down from the Ace he makes on an average 3.58 tricks. If he leads from Y, heading whatever card A plays with a card as low as 8 if necessary, he makes 3.73 tricks. If he finesses the 10 he makes 3.92, and if not lower than the Queen he makes 4.06 tricks.

It therefore follows that with four outstanding cards deep finessing is not expedient.

Now suppose Z has the same hand, but Y has only three cards, say, the 5, 4, 3. Five cards are outstanding—viz. K, J, 9, 7, 6. Then by leading straight down from the Ace Z will make on an average 3.12 tricks. By finessing down to the 8 he makes 3.61 tricks ; down to the 10, 3.80 tricks, and down to the Queen, 3.52.

Therefore in this case, with five outstanding cards, the *deep finesse down to the* 10 *is the best line of play.* It is, in fact, better to finesse so low as the 8 rather than to the Queen.

This is a most interesting fact which few players realise.

It is very useful to know the approximate value of mere length in a trump suit.

Suppose that you hold the lowest possible trump strength starting from the 2 upwards, and, knowing nothing of what your partner may have, the chances are as follows :

Number held	*Will win the following number of tricks in* 100 *times*
6 Trumps—	3 or more in 77, 4 or more in 48, 5 or more in 26
7 Trumps—	4 or more in 87, 5 or more in 57, 6 or more in 33
8 Trumps—	5 or more in 93, 6 or more in 68, 7 or more in 40
9 Trumps—	6 or more in 98, 7 or more in 82, 8 or more in 45

So that if you hold ♠ 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, you can calculate

that it is worth three tricks, very likely four, if Spades are trumps ; or 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 are worth seven tricks—very likely eight.

Then there is the interesting question of a suit going round without being ruffed. When you know nothing of what your partner may hold you can expect that in 100 times :

Holding *four* cards, the suit will go round once or more 97 times, twice or more 78 times, three times or more 35 times.

Holding *five* cards, once or more 95 times, twice or more 68 times, three times or more 21 times.

Holding *six* cards, once or more 91 times, twice or more 54 times, three times 10 times.

Holding *seven* cards, once or more 86 times, twice or more 38 times, three times 3 times.

Some Facts and Figures

There are 635,013,559,600 different hands that can be dealt to any player, so that the odds against his having any particular set of cards is 635,013,559,599, to 1. And, having one of these many hands, a second player can have any of 8,122,425,444 different hands, a third player one of 10,400,600, and the fourth player has what cards are left; so that, altogether, a pack of cards can be dealt to four particular players in about 53,645 quadrillion different ways.

Considered numerically, without regard to the denomination of each card, a suit can be distributed among four hands in 39 different ways, of which the distributions 4, 4, 3, 2 ; 5, 3, 3, 2 ; 5, 4, 3, 1 ; 5, 4, 2, 2 ; 4, 3, 3, 3 ; 6, 3, 2, 2 ; 6, 4, 2, 1 ; 6, 3, 3, 1 ; 5, 5, 2, 1 ; and 4, 4, 4, 1 are the most prevalent types in order of frequency. These ten distributions cover 91 per cent. of all cases. The first five account for 71 per cent. of the whole. You can safely take 10*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* against having a 4, 4, 3, 2 hand in any deal if you can find anyone ready to lay the odds.

The odds are 794 to 206, little less than four to one on a singleton being dealt to at least one of the players in any deal.

The odds are 378 to 1 against all four Aces being dealt to a particular hand, or 86 to 1 against their being found in any hand of a deal.

The odds against a particular hand including all five honours of a particular suit are 2,018 to 1 ; or of any suit, 504 to 1.

The odds against one Ace being dealt to each player in any deal is 9 to 1 ; that is to say, it is 9 to 1 on that some lucky player has at least two Aces.

If a player holds four honours, or three Aces, it is 2 to 1 against his partner having the other one.

If two honours, or one Ace, it is 33 to 1 against his partner having all three others, 3 to 1 against his having at least two of them, but 3 to 1 in favour of his having at least one of them.

The odds against a Yarborough, a hand with no card higher than a nine, being dealt to a particular player are 1,827 to 1.

PART THREE

AMERICAN CONTRACT BRIDGE

American Contract Bridge

There is a revival of Contract in this country. That is to say, it is now being played at several London clubs as well as in many private circles. I do not think that it will supersede Auction as a regular club game. It is too difficult, and the rubbers are too long. Also it has not been standardised in England.

The Contract now being played is widely different from that which was introduced some years ago, and is also different from " Plafond," which is played in France, and from the Contract played at the Jockey Club, Vienna, and at the Casino, Budapest, and all over Italy, Jugo-Slavia, and Czecho-Slovakia.

English players have adopted the American code of laws formulated by the Whist Club of New York in 1927 and given in this chapter. It is a wonderful and fascinating game, and appeals especially to those who like big figures.

The bidding and tactics at Contract differ considerably in many respects from Auction.

The first important distinction is that Declarer's partner should show a solid suit whenever he can, and this bid over his partner does not mean denial of partner's original bid.

At Auction, if a player bids " Two Diamonds " over his partner's " One Heart," it means one of two things : (*a*) " Partner, I cannot support your Heart bid at all, but I have some strength in Diamonds " ; or (*b*) " I think I have a better chance of game in Diamonds than you have in Hearts."

At Contract the bid means great strength in Diamonds, and therefore invites further bidding to secure a game-securing contract. This distinction should be realised when you play Contract.

On the general tactics of bidding and play at Contract, as distinct from Auction, the first principle to learn is that

it is not necessary to make, or attempt to make, a game call on every hand. Don't be in a hurry to overcall your hand or force things. If you are in doubt as to the advisability of bidding or putting up your partner to a game contract, *don't.*

There are two good reasons for this advice. First, if you have made a contract that does not carry game, your opponents are likely to leave you alone in it. Secondly, it is much more useful at Contract than it is at Auction to have points below the line. If you have points towards game in your favour, you are in a strong position for your next call.

A further factor is that, the higher you put up your contract, the more you curtail your bonus. Therefore, never exchange a practical certainty for an uncertainty. Be content to go slow and take the game by easy stages. At the same time, when you have a really good hand go all out for it. Pre-empt up to the limit of its possibilities.

The Silent Trap

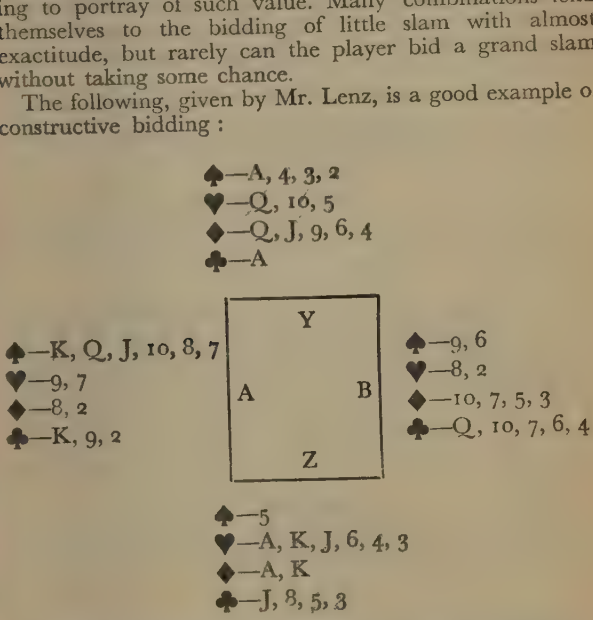
Another important point is : Do not be misled by the silence of your adversaries. It does not follow that they have not good cards. They may be willing to allow you to play a hand in which they know you cannot go game. But if, because of their silence, you venture unjustifiably on a game call, they may pounce on you and bring off a big double. This is a trap into which beginners at Contract frequently fall

At Auction one must call to put the Declarers up, or to get them beyond their depth At Contract often the best way to achieve the like result is by silence. At Auction, silence is always a virtue when you have a bad hand. At Contract, silence is often a virtue when you have a good hand.

But when you and your partner have good hands the great idea is to go for the big thing. It is not enough to make your contract, or even game and rubber. You must be looking out for opportunities to bid little or grand slam, with their big bonuses.

For this purpose you have to make what appear to our conservative British ideas extraordinarily wild or mad bids. You show Aces or ability to stop an adverse suit by bidding that suit when you are bare of it to indicate that you can ruff it on first round. At no card game other than Contract is the ability to understand what the partner is endeavouring to portray of such value. Many combinations lend themselves to the bidding of little slam with almost exactitude, but rarely can the player bid a grand slam without taking some chance.

The following, given by Mr. Lenz, is a good example of constructive bidding :



Z deals, and bids " Two Hearts " ; A, " Three Spades " ; Y, " *Four Spades !* " ; B, " No bid " ; Z " *Five Diamonds !* " ; A, " No bid " ; Y " Seven Hearts."

Have you got it ?

This is how it works out. The original bid by Z was conventional, and A's pre-emptive bid of " Three Spades " was made with a willingness to accept a penalty to save the

game. Y's bid of " Four Spades " was to assure partner that no tricks would be lost in Spades, as he held the Ace. Unless Y had a slam in view, he would have bid " Four Hearts." Z then bids the Diamonds with the same object, as Y can always bid " Five Hearts." The grand slam is bid by Y instead of the little slam, because Z's Diamond bid shows an exceptional hand, and Y's holding is too powerful to expect a Club bid to be raised beyond " Six Hearts." Of course, the contract is made without any difficulty.

Such bidding makes the brain of the average Britisher to reel ! But that is the kind of thing you have to learn if you are to compete at Contract !

Synopsis of

THE LAWS OF CONTRACT BRIDGE

As adopted by

THE WHIST CLUB

New York

1927

(By permission of the Whist Club, New York)

Trick Values

No Trumps, 35 ; Spades, 30 ; Hearts, 30 ; Diamonds, 20 ; Clubs, 20. Doubling doubles trick values. Redoubling multiplies them by four.

Game

A game is won when one side makes a contract score of 100 or more points. Of the tricks made, only those contracted for are scored in the contract score. All tricks made over and above those contracted for are scored in the honour score.

Rubber

A rubber is ended when one side wins two games.

Vulnerable

After a side wins one game they become " Vulnerable." Until a side wins a game, they are " Not Vulnerable."

Premiums

All premiums are scored in the honour score, and are classified as follows :

Honours :	*Points*
4 in one hand	100
5 in one hand	150
4 Aces in one hand in No Trumps	150
All other	None

For Winning Final Game of Rubber :	*Points*
If a two-game rubber	700
If a three-game rubber	500

Making Contract :

If undoubled	None
If doubled (when Declarer is Not Vulnerable)	50
If doubled (when Declarer is Vulnerable)	100

Extra Tricks :

If undoubled (when Declarer is Vulnerable or Not Vulnerable), per trick	50
If doubled (when Declarer is Not Vulnerable), per trick	100
If doubled (when Declarer is Vulnerable), per trick	200

Slams Bid and Made :

Little slam (when Declarer is Not Vulnerable)	500
(when Declarer is Vulnerable)	750
Grand slam (when Declarer is Not Vulnerable)	1,000
(when Declarer is Vulnerable)	1,500
Unbid slams made	None

Slam premiums are additional to all other premiums. Doubling and redoubling do not alter slam premiums.

Undertricks (scored in Adversaries' honour score) :	*Points*
If undoubled (when Declarer is Not Vulnerable), per trick	50
If undoubled (when Declarer is Vulnerable) :	
For first trick	100
For subsequent tricks, per trick	200
If doubled (when Declarer is Not Vulnerable) :	
First two tricks, per trick	100
For third and fourth tricks, per trick	200
For subsequent tricks, per trick	400

If doubled (when Declarer is Vulnerable) :	*Points*
For first trick	200
For subsequent tricks, per trick	400

Redoubling doubles the doubled premiums and penalties except those for slams.

Revoke

The revoke penalty for either side is the loss of two tricks for any player's first revoke. One hundred points additional penalty for each subsequent revoke by the same player.

Goulash

When all four players pass, no bid having been made, and the players desire to play Goulash, the cards shall be redealt by the same dealer. Before surrendering his hand, each player shall sort his cards into suits, arranging the cards in each suit according to value. The dealer then places his cards face down on the table, and each player in turn, beginning with the player on the right of the dealer, places his cards face down on top of those of the preceding player. The cards are then cut by the player at the dealer's right (no shuffling of any kind is permitted) and are dealt as follows : Five at a time to each player in turn, beginning with the player on the left of the dealer, again five at a time to each player, and finally three at a time to each player.

When all players pass, no bid having been made, the same procedure is followed as before, the cards being dealt by the same dealer.

If a misdeal is properly called, the Goulash is abandoned and the next dealer deals in the regular way with the still pack.

PART FOUR
ACTUALITIES

Fifty Hands From Play

The fifty hands given in this section have occurred actually at the card-table.

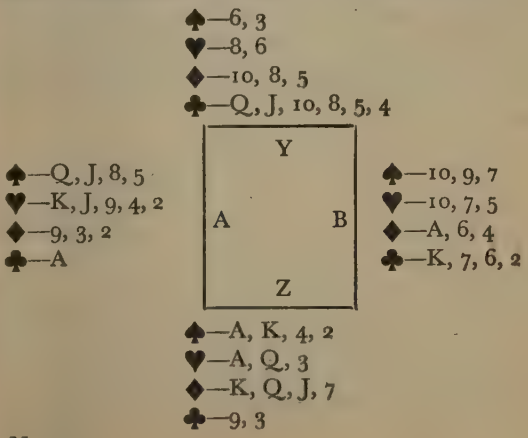
They illustrate various points of bidding and play dealt with in this book.

Examples of various types are included, and the reader can learn from the examples both what to do and what not to do. Badly played hands are often as illuminating as those brilliantly played.

1. *Bad Initial Bidding*

In spite of all that has been written about the importance of the soundness of an initial bid, numerous players still go on in the same old way, regardless of the disasters they bring upon themselves.

A particularly flagrant case occurred at a London club, where the player in fault should have known better.



Nb

Score : game all. Y Z, 16 in rubber game. Y deals, and bids " One Club " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " One No Trump " ; A, " Two Hearts " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Two No Trumps." All pass.

A opens the 4 of Hearts. Z has a double stop in the suit, but cannot establish Clubs. He can make only seven tricks, viz. three Diamonds, two Hearts, and two Spades, and is down on his contract.

Y is the culprit. By bidding Clubs originally he indicated at least two quick tricks. If he had had only one quick trick Z could have made his contract, game, and rubber.

Y's excuse was that at the score he thought it advisable to show his long Clubs initially. But this was just what he should not have done. He should have waited to bid them on second round.

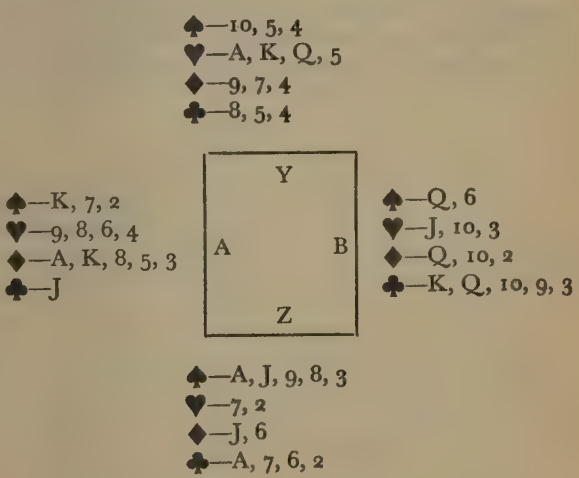
So Y committed the double fault of bidding when he should have passed and passing when he should have bid, claiming quick tricks which he had not got and denying length which he had!

If Y had opened with " No Bid," as he should, B would also have said " No bid." If Z then bid " One No Trump," and A " Two Hearts," Y can now call " Three Clubs " without fear of deceiving his partner, and, if left with them, makes game and rubber.

2. *Bidding a Hand Twice Over*

One of the mistakes that most of us are inclined to make is the over-valuation of our own hands. When our partners make bids we are not, as a rule, half so optimistic about them as we are about our own cards. The most common form of error is to bid one's hand twice over—that is to say, to bid it a second time when we have called up to its full value already.

Here is a case which illustrates the point :



Score : love all. Z deals, and bids " One Spade " ; A, " Two Diamonds " ; Y, " Two Spades " ; B, ' Three Diamonds " ; Z, " Three Spades." All pass.

The King of Diamonds was opened by A, and Z was one down on his contract, losing two Diamonds, one Spade, and two Clubs.

Now this you may say was not a very serious catastrophe. Quite true. But it was bad bidding and bad business.

Z had just a bare " One Spade " bid, and, even though his partner had put him up, he should not have called again. He, in fact, called his hand twice over.

He had not even the excuse of saving the game, for the game was not in danger. If he hoped that Y had another raise he ought to have left Y to say so. No. He foolishly imagined in some muddled way that his partner's support made his own cards bigger !

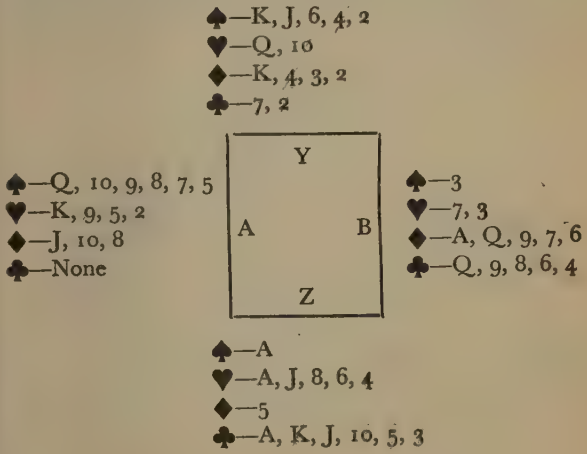
Such examples of bad bidding are not isolated or infrequent. They occur day by day. The point to realise is that when you have once called your hand to its full value you should not bid it again, even though your partner has supported you.

3. *Difficult Bidding*

It frequently happens at Bridge that the player with the strongest hand at the table loses points, because he will go on attacking when he is quite safe in defence.

To " let well alone " when you have a certainty of saving the game, and are not certain of success if you continue bidding yourself, is a precept which many players find it difficult to follow.

Here is a case in point from actual play :



Score : game all. Z dealt, and bid " One No Trump " ; A, " Two Spades " ; Y, " No bid " ; B, " Three Diamonds " ; Z, " Four Clubs " ; A, " No bid " ; Y, " Three No Trumps " ; B, " Double." All pass.

A opened the Jack of Diamonds, and A B made five tricks in Diamonds, one Heart, and two Clubs, Z losing 400 points.

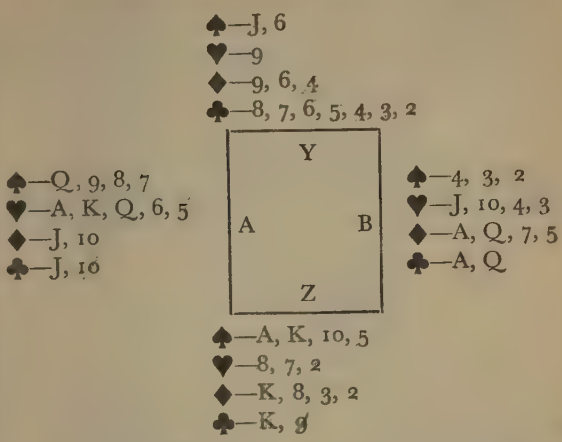
Now, as to the bidding, Z's initial bid of "One No Trump" with three Aces was justifiable, although two singletons always make a No Trumper dangerous.

A's "Two Spades" bid was not so bad in rubber game, as he suspected a long Club No Trumper. Y should have doubled "Two Spades." B's "Three Diamonds" bid was courageous, to say the least of it. Z's bid of "Four Clubs" was not really bad, but Y's put back into "Three No Trumps" was entirely wrong! He had no certain guard in Diamonds, and, as it turned out, had no guard at all.

The bidding was difficult, and none of the bids except Y's was really bad. But if Z only had been content to leave the "Three Diamonds" bid alone he would have saved the game.

4. *Bad Bidding and Play*

(A Hand from the British Embassy, Constantinople.)



Score : game all. A deals, and bids " One Heart " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Three Spades " ; A, " Double." All pass.

I have heard some forward bidding, but never anything to equal this. Z had a bare " One Spade " bid, and to make a pre-emptive bid on it of three was a most flagrant overcall.

But the amazing part was that Z made his " Three Spades."

This was the play :

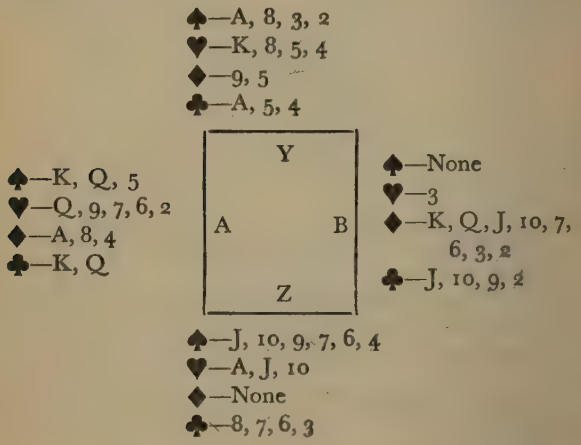
(1) A led Jack of Clubs, taken by B with the Ace.
(2) B led Queen of Clubs, taken by Z with the King.
(3) Z led 5 of Spades, taken by A with the Queen.
(4) A led King of Hearts, which won.
(5) A led Jack of Diamonds, taken by B with the Ace.
(6) B led Queen of Diamonds, taken by Z with the King.

Z now drew trumps, put the lead into Dummy with the 9 of Diamonds, and made the last three tricks with the 8, 7, 6 of Clubs !

This shows what can be done with bad hands when the enemy help you by bad play. Of course A's play was atrocious. When he won the third trick with the Queen of Spades he should, after playing King of Hearts, have led a Spade, in which case Z must be down on his contract.

5. *A Good Save on Majority Bidding*

This is a hand which illustrates the value of majority bidding for pushing opponents out of their depth.



Score : game all. A B, 10 in rubber game. A deals, and bids " One No Trump " ; Y, " No bid " ; B, " Three Diamonds " ; Z, " Three Spades " ; A, " Three No Trumps " ; Y, " Four Spades " ; B, " Five Diamonds " ; Z, " Five Spades " ; A, " Double." All pass.

A opens the Ace of Diamonds. Z trumps, and leads Jack

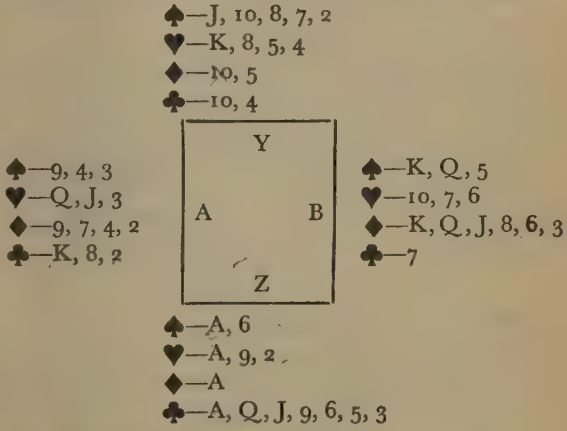
of Spades. A must cover with the Queen. Z loses one Spade and two Clubs, and is one down on his contract.

You will notice that B could have made five Diamonds, losing only one Club and one Heart. Z's bid was a good and cheap rubber saver. A's double, sitting over the Spade bidder, looked worth more than it proved to be.

Majority bidding saved the rubber for A and B.

6. *Lure of a Hundred Aces*

Here is a case where the Declarer clung tenaciously (how I sympathise with him!) to his hundred Aces, to his downfall :



Score : game all. Y Z, 18 in rubber game. Z dealt, and bid " One No Trump " ; A and Y, " No bid " ; B, " Two Diamonds " ; Z, " Two No Trumps." Finished.

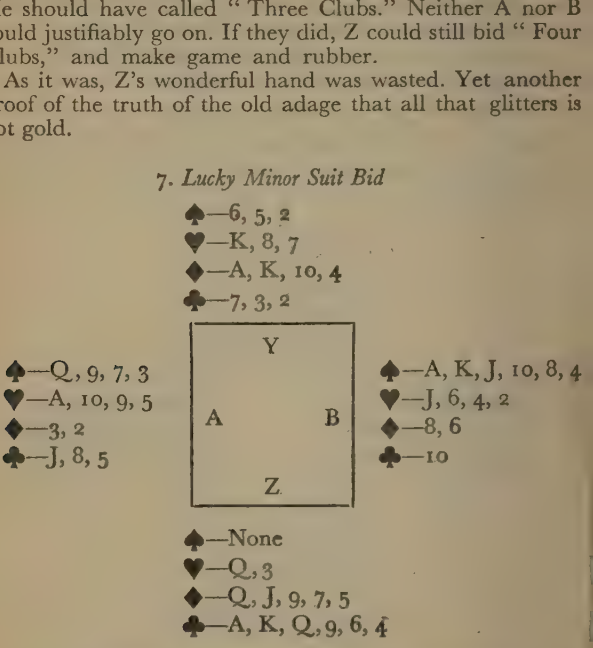
Winning the first trick with the Ace of Diamonds, Z put Dummy in with the King of Hearts, and led 10 of Clubs, losing the finesse. Whereupon, A B made one Club and five Diamonds, defeating the contract.

Z's initial bid, while, of course, defensible, was unsound

at the score. He had a far better chance of making game in Clubs, but with his Aces he quite naturally bid "No Trumps." But when B by his bid warned him of the position it was absolutely foolhardy to pursue the No Trumper. He should have called "Three Clubs." Neither A nor B could justifiably go on. If they did, Z could still bid "Four Clubs," and make game and rubber.

As it was, Z's wonderful hand was wasted. Yet another proof of the truth of the old adage that all that glitters is not gold.

7. *Lucky Minor Suit Bid*



Score : game all. B dealt, and bid "One Spade" ; Z, "Two Diamonds" ; A, "Two Spades" ; Y, "Three Diamonds" ; B, "Three Spades" ; Z, "Four Diamonds" ; A, "Four Spades" ; Y and B, "No bid" ; Z, "Six Clubs." All pass. A opened a Spade, Z trumped, cleared his Clubs, and lost only one Heart.

I consider Z showed great enterprise. It is true B could not have made four Spades. He must have been at least one

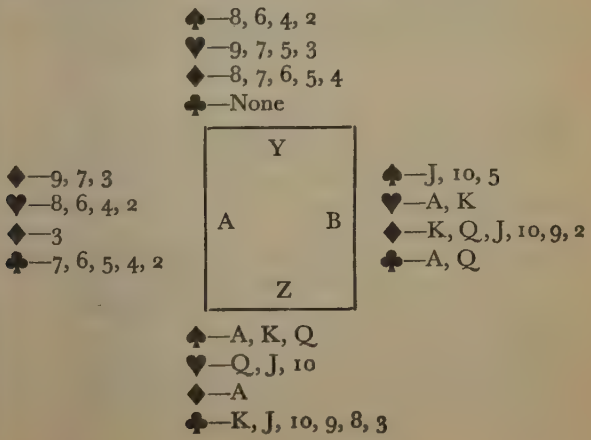
down, but against this he would have scored 81 for honours and have saved the game and rubber at no cost if undoubled. Z probably did not expect quite to make his contract, but was out to save the rubber cheaply.

I consider Z's bid of six Clubs good. It showed his partner a second suit, and enabled Y to go back to Diamonds if he so preferred. As he had three Clubs, I think he quite rightly left it. Z could stand being forced in Clubs better than in Diamonds. If Y had had only one or two Clubs he should have taken back into Diamonds. Of course, it was a lucky hand, and might easily have gone wrong.

One of the points of interest is the demonstration of what may be done in a minor suit against a powerful major.

8. *Puzzle in Bidding and Play*

Hands in which either side, granted the conventional opening lead, could make three or more by cards in No Trumps are rare. The following is particularly interesting because it is difficult to say that the bidding was bad or wrong, although it turned out disastrously for Z.



Score : game all. Y Z, 20 in rubber game. Z dealt, and bid " One No Trump " ; A, " No bid " ; Y, " No bid " ; B, " Two No Trumps " ; Z, " Double." All passed.

Z opened conventionally the Jack of Clubs, and the trick was taken by B with the Queen.

The lead of King of Diamonds drew Z's Ace, and Z now naturally continued his Clubs.

The result was that B made nine tricks, game, and rubber, losing only Ace of Diamonds and three Spades.

Seeing all four hands, it is easy to be wise after the event and condemn Z's double and play.

But, personally and dispassionately, I consider Z was justified in his double.

It looked good. It was certain he could clear his Clubs in two rounds, and, with every other suit stopped, it appeared a sound double. Moreover, he had no reason for suspecting the peculiar disposition of the cards or that B had six Diamonds. B's call looked to Z, on the face of it, like a flag-flier at the score.

Of course, if Z had played differently and led his Queen of Hearts instead of playing Clubs, he could have made one more trick, but he could not defeat the " Two No Trump " contract. I think that most of us would bid and play as Z did.

It is interesting to note that if, instead of doubling, Z had called " Three No Trumps," which would probably have been doubled by B, Z would have made his contract if A had made the conventional lead of his fourth highest Club. He must make five Clubs, one Diamond, and three Spades.

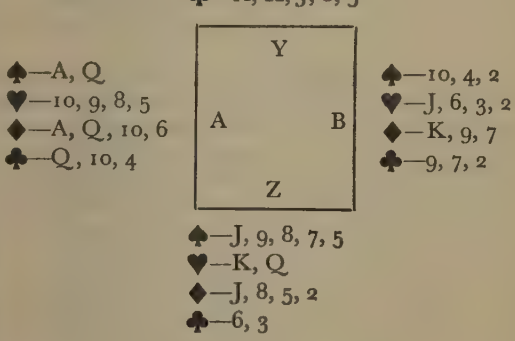
This hand, which I set in a competition some time ago, has been very severely criticised. The points raised by the critics are : (1) That Z must not double and lead Clubs. (2) That Z should bid " Four Clubs." (3) Z should bid " Three No Trumps."

But I still think that in Z's position the double of " Two No Trumps " looked a good thing, and that the critics of the bidding and play are judging by results.

9. *Little Slam on a Bad Bid*

Virtue is not always rewarded at Bridge, any more than it is in life. The careful caller does not always reap the rewards of his carefulness, nor is the bad bidder always punished as he deserves.

The following case is an example of an extraordinarily lucky result from a bad bid.



Score : game all. A deals, and bids " One No Trump " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Two Spades " ; A, " Two No Trumps " ; Y, " Three Spades " ; B and Z, " No bid " ; A, " Double." All pass.

The bidding of both A and Z was bad. A had just a bare initial No Trumper. Y had a strong hand and might have made an informatory double. But, having the lead, he was quite content to leave the " No Trump " in, sit tight, and pass. Z had no right to bid " Two Spades." The only justification for a bid from him at all was to show a lead to

his partner. But, not having a suit of any value to show—his Spades were not even in sequence—he had no reason to bid at all. In justice he ought to have been penalised.

A, having made a weak No Trumper, was afraid to pass the "Two Spade" bid lest his partner should think he had not a guard. He naturally placed the King of Spades with Z, and thought he had a double guard in the suit. But his hand was not strong enough to risk a second bid.

Y, who held the best hand of the lot, could either now make a business double or support his partner. It being the rubber game, he chose the latter course. A's double was one of the worst on record. He had over-called his hand already. What possible chance had he of defeating the Spades? Even if he was, as he supposed, sitting over the King, his hand at best could not be worth more than four tricks.

In so far as A bid badly, he richly deserved the fate that befell him, and that was a little slam for Z! Hard luck on poor B, who had to suffer in silence throughout.

How, you may say, did Z manage to make a little slam? Here, again, I think A showed himself weak in play as in bidding. With Y's hand exposed on the table, he ought to have made his quick tricks at once. But he opened with 10 of Hearts, Z took the trick with the King (not the Queen), and led a small Spade. A rightly put up his Ace, and then led another Heart, placing his partner with the Queen. Z took the trick with the Queen, led a Spade, taken by Dummy's King, and then led a third Spade to clear the suit, putting himself in. A Club from Z and a successful finesse of the Jack gave Z three discards of losing Diamonds, and the play of the Ace of Hearts enabled him to get rid of his fourth.

Result: Z won 108 points below the line, 250 above (for contract, two over-tricks, and little slam), and game and rubber.

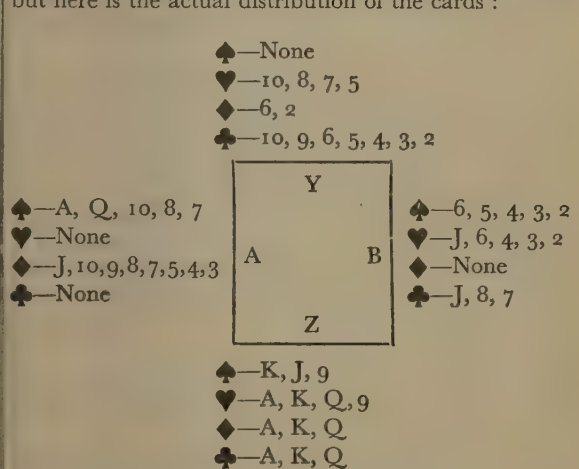
Can you beat it?

10. *Greatest Tragedy?*

As a contrast to the foregoing consider this !

The greatest Bridge tragedy which has reached me so far is a duly vouched-for game that was played at Vittel, in which my correspondent took part.

Score : game all. Z dealt, and bid " One No Trump " ; A, " Two Spades " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Two No Trumps " ; thereupon A bid " Three Spades " ; Y and B, again passed, and Z doubled. A made a grand slam in doubled Spades. This may seem incredible at first sight, but here is the actual distribution of the cards :



Clubs were opened by Y and trumped by A, who led a Diamond and trumped in his Dummy. A Spade was then led from Dummy and the 10 successfully finessed. A second Diamond was led by A, trumped, and a Spade led. A third Diamond led and trumped established all A's Diamonds. A put himself in by ruffing a Heart with his 8 of Spades, played Ace of Spades, drawing Z's King, and proceeded to make all his remaining Diamonds.

What a tragedy for Z, who had three No Trumps sitting, and would have made four if A opened a Spade.

The moral is that a double, however good looking, is often delusive, and when game and rubber are certain it is better to choose the certainty !

11. *You Never Can Tell*

A somewhat dogmatic player was lecturing his partner who had gone down 200 on a " Four Heart " bid doubled over a " Three No Trumper."

" It is really ridiculous to make such a bid," he said. " It is absolutely impossible to make four by cards against a ' Three No Trump ' bid."

Now, apart from the folly of saying that anything is " impossible " at Bridge, our dogmatist had neglected to remark that his partner had saved the game and rubber cheaply by a loss of 200 points, less 64 for honours. If he had not called " Four Hearts," the opponents would have made game and rubber in " Three No Trumps."

But that is not the point. He made a very positive assertion which would have passed unchallenged by me, as I never interfere in other people's disputes unless invited to express my opinion. I have enough troubles of my own in life. As, however, he turned to me for confirmation, I ventured mildly to disagree.

" I have seen it done," I said.

" Only because the No Trumper was unsound," he replied. " Of course, if people call unsound No Trumpers anything may happen."

" Not at all," I said. " I have seen four by cards made against an absolutely sound ' Three ' No Trumper on several occasions, and I can tell you something better than that. I have seen a player make " Five Spades " doubled against a bid of " Four No Trumps," when the doubler had four Aces and four Kings."

" Oh, of course, you are talking about a freak hand where the player held eleven of the suit to the Q, J. Although even then I don't see how he could make it, as, apart from the A, K of his suit, he must lose two other tricks."

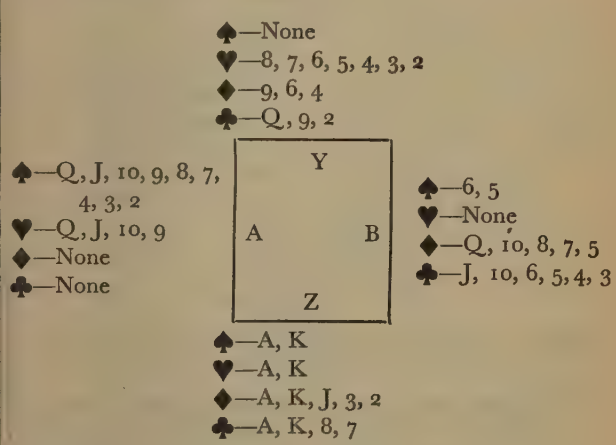
" Certainly," I replied, " if he had eleven of his suit, but in the case I have in mind he had only nine, and yet he made ' Five Spades ' doubled."

" It seems to me incredible," he said, " and I am open to bet it was only by bad play on the part of the defenders."

" There you are wrong. It was not a case of bad play. As the cards lay, the Declarer could make his contract against any possible defence, no matter what the lead."

" I'll bet you a fiver there is a flaw in it. If, as you say, he had only nine Spades and four other cards he must be at least one down, anyhow."

" I don't bet on certainties," I replied. " Now I will show you the hand."



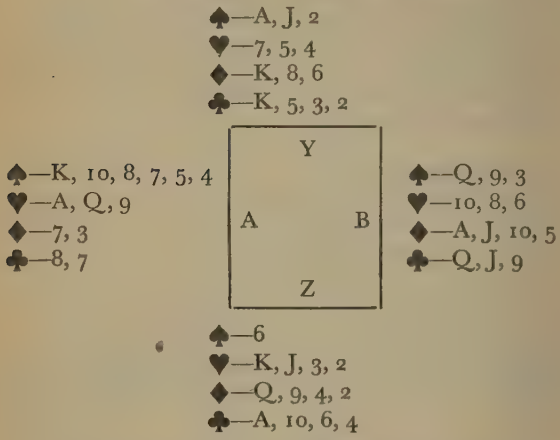
Score : game all. Z dealt, and bid " Two No Trumps " ; A, " Three Spades " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Three No Trumps " ; A, " Four Spades " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z (after considerable hesitation, wondering whether to double or not), " Four No Trumps " ; A, " Five Spades " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z (triumphantly), " Double." All pass.

Ob

Y opened 5 of Hearts ruffed in Dummy. A led a Diamond from Dummy, and ruffed, and then a Heart from his own hand ruffed by Dummy.

After this, Z could make only his Ace and King of Spades, and A made " Five Spades " doubled, game, and rubber.

12. *Danger of a Light No Trumper*



Score game all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump " ; A, " Two Spades " ; Y, " Two No Trumps " ; B, " Double.' All pass.

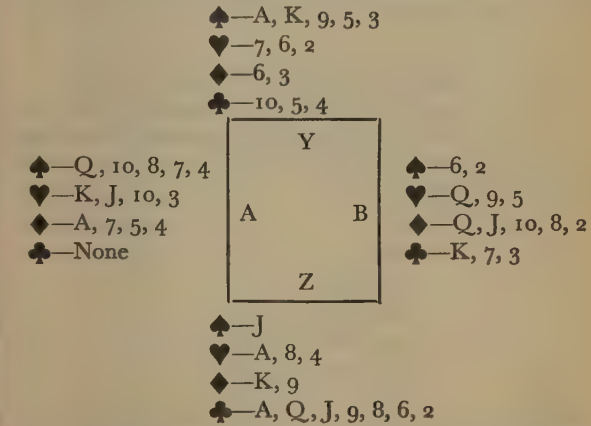
A opens the 7 of Spades. Z plays small from Dummy ; B takes the trick with the 9 of Spades (applying the Eleven Rule), and returns the Queen. Z takes the third round of Spades in Dummy's hand and leads three rounds of Clubs, B taking the third round with his Queen. B then leads the 10 of Hearts, Z covers with the Jack. A takes with the Queen, and proceeds to make three winning Spades. Z is obliged to discard a Heart and two Diamonds. A then leads 7 of Diamonds taken by B with the Ace. B has kept a Heart and leads it, with the result that A makes his two winning

Hearts, A B make ten tricks in all, and Z only makes three —500 down.

Z had no one but himself to blame. His original No Trumper was far too light. It had a single Spade—always dangerous in a No Trump bid—no strong suit of any kind, only one Ace, a King, a Queen, and a Jack. In my opinion it was asking for trouble to bid at all on this hand.

Y's put-up was perfectly justifiable.

13. *Safety Play of No Trumper.*



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump." All pass.

A opens 7 of Spades.

From A's lead, by the Eleven Rule, Z knows that A's opening is from four or more Spades headed by Q, 10. It would therefore be safe to pass the trick up to his singleton Jack, which would certainly be a winner. But, if he does so, he may, and as the cards lie, will certainly, fail to make game. He must clear his Clubs, as, if B gets in, B will probably lead a Diamond through his King, and A B will make

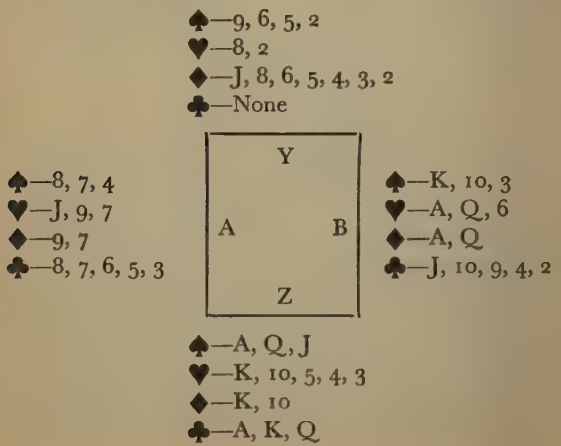
altogether six tricks (viz. five Diamonds and King of Clubs). Z's correct play is to put up King of Spades, lead out the Ace of Spades, and then lead 10 of Clubs, finessing it if not covered. This play is perfectly safe, for, if A holds King of Clubs, the 9 of Spades is a guard in that suit and A can only make two Spade tricks. If after that he leads either Hearts or Diamonds, Z is sure of game.

In play Z made the mistake of taking the first trick in his own hand. He then led out Ace, followed by Queen of Clubs, which was taken by B with the King. B did not, of course, return a Spade, but led his Queen of Diamonds, and Z missed game and rubber.

14. *Taking Out in a Minor Suit*

On certain types of hands it is necessary to take out a No Trumper into a long suit, however weak the hand, and if the " No Trump " bidder persists after the first warning, to take out a second time.

Here is a case :



Score : game all. Z deals.

Actual bidding : Z, " One No Trump " ; A, " No bid " ; Y, " Two Diamonds " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " Two No Trumps " ; A, " No bid " ; Y, " Three Diamonds." All pass.

Z on his strong hand was justified, perhaps, in disregarding the first warning by his partner. But when Y re-bid his Diamonds Z was quite right not to go on. Y said to Z in the language of Bridge :

" Partner, my hand is no good to you in No Trumps. I must play it in Diamonds."

B was quite content with the bid of " Three Diamonds," and felt certain he had the saving of the game.

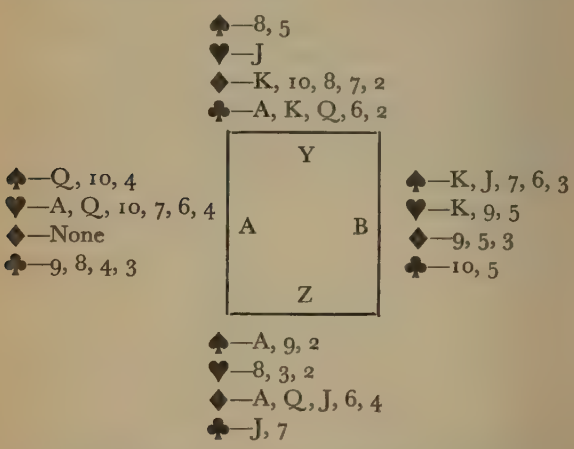
But he hadn't. Y made a little slam, losing only the Ace of Diamonds, as B opened Clubs, on which Y discarded his Hearts. Whereas Z would have been hard put to it to make even the odd trick in No Trumps !

15. *The Pre-emptive Raise.*

The pre-emptive raise of partner's bid, before an opponent has had an opportunity of speaking, is a most valuable weapon of attack when used judiciously.

It has a double purpose. First of all, it assures partner that he has hit upon the right call, and, secondly, it frequently prevents fourth hand bidding and shuts out opponents from showing the combined strength.

Here is a case in point :



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One Diamond " ; A, " One Heart " ; Y, " Five Diamonds." All pass.

This is a good example of the pre-emptive raise properly made.

On his hand Y was anxious to shut out B from assisting the Heart or showing Spades. If Y over the Heart bid says only " Two Diamonds," or even three, B will certainly show his Spades or assist the Hearts. A and B can go game in either major suit.

But you may argue, surely the same result would be

achieved if Y does not make a pre-emptive raise. He can support his partner on subsequent rounds of the bidding up to five just the same.

Not at all. Mark the difference. If B has once the chance of bidding, the whole complexion of the game is altered. If he supports A's Hearts it is just possible that, in the rubber game, A, with no Diamonds, will carry the bidding up to " Five Hearts."

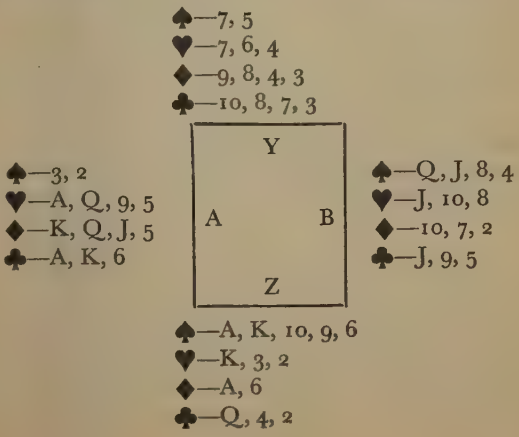
If he is doubled he loses 100 points, less 32 for honours, and saves the rubber at small cost. And it is quite possible he might not even be doubled.

Further, if B bids Spades, A will support him up to four. If left in, B makes game and rubber in Spades, losing only one Spade and two Clubs.

The point is that, if B is once allowed to speak, Z and Y may lose the rubber if Spades are shown against them.

16. *Informatory Double of One of a Suit*

The benefit of the informatory double of one of a suit *when properly made* is illustrated by the following :



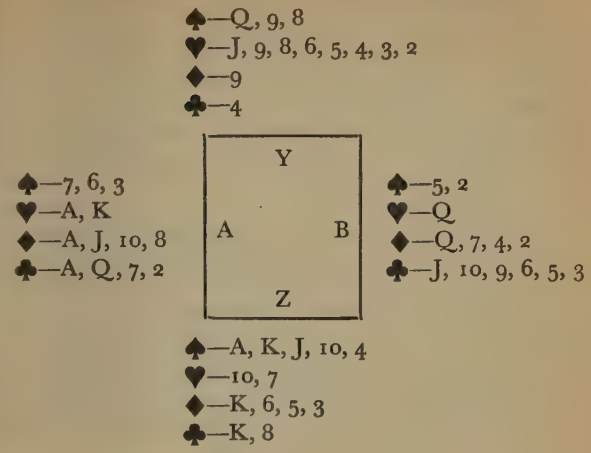
Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One Spade " ; A, " Double " ; Y, " No bid " ; B, " One No Trump." All pass. Z opens 9 of Spades, and B makes game and rubber.

If A does not play the informatory double, what is he to do after Z's bid ? He can keep quiet, with the probability of saving the game. He can bid " One No Trump " himself, and risk his partner stopping the Spade suit, or he can make a doubtful bid in Hearts or Diamonds, in neither of which suits can he go game. It is true that as the cards lie Z cannot make even one Spade, but A does not know that. Nor, if he knew it, would it be advisable to go for comparatively paltry penalties when game and rubber are possible

This is a valuable example, because B's hand is very poor, and one on which in the ordinary way he could neither bid nor support a bid made by A.

Of course, A's hand is very strong—stronger than the requisite minimum for a double of one of a suit. But the point is that players who will not use the informatory double, and who rightly observe the sound rule of not bidding a No Trumper without a guard in the adverse suit, would have missed the game and rubber on the hand in question.

17. Where the Informatory Double Scored



Score : game all. Y Z, 18 in rubber game. Z, " One Spade " ; A, " Double " ; Y, " Two Spades " ; B, " Three Clubs " ; Z and A, " No bid " ; Y, " Three Hearts " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " Three Spades " ; A, " Five Clubs " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Double." All pass.

I am not prepared to say the bidding was good, but you have to remember the state of the score and the anxiety of A B to save the rubber and Y Z to make it. But the point I want to rub in is the value of the informatory double on the part of A.

On ordinary lines, A, after the bid of " One Spade," if he does not play the informatory double, is in great difficulty. His hand is certainly too good to pass, especially at the score, as, for all he knows, Z may make two Spades, and game and rubber. If he is not a doubler, A, on the old lines, must pass, risk a No Trumper, or bid " Two Diamonds." None of these courses would be satisfactory. The

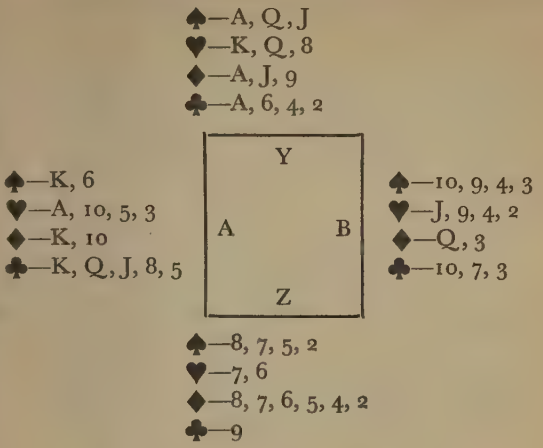
informatory double is his only hope of getting good results from his hand.

When, after the double, Y bids "Two Spades," B is in the ordinary way relieved of all obligation of making a bid, and no doubt, if the score had been love, he would have remained silent. But at the critical score, and knowing his partner had considerable strength, B made a shot at it and bid "Three Clubs"—a bad call in the ordinary way, but not really bad in the circumstances. After that the contest lay between the others.

Y, with eight Hearts, cannot be blamed for putting up a fight, nor can Z, after having received a "lift" in the Spade bid, be criticised for preferring the Spade suit. When A bid "Five Clubs," Y was hardly in a position to continue the bidding, especially as his partner had not been able to support his Hearts. Z's business double was not really bad. It was *free*. He had, on the face of it, a reasonable chance of defeating the contract, and he did not see his way to bidding "Four Spades," which, of course, A was prepared to double on business lines.

The result was disastrous for Y and Z. B made five Clubs doubled (losing only two tricks in Spades), and game and rubber. And this result was wholly and solely due to the informatory double.

18. *Successful Informatory Double taken out on a Yarborough*



Score : game all. A B, 20 in rubber game ; Y Z *nil*. A dealt, and bid " One No Trump " ; Y, " Double " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " Two Diamonds " ; A, " Three Clubs " ; Y, " Three Diamonds." All pass.

A opened the King of Clubs and Z made five by cards, losing only one Heart and one Diamond.

Before the invention of the informatory double, Y would have had two alternatives. He could have called " Two No Trumps," which would have failed. Or he could have passed, and A B would have made their contract and game and rubber, as Z could not have spoken on his Yarborough.

When the score is at a critical position and you do not want the opponents to get out lightly, the informatory double is particularly useful.

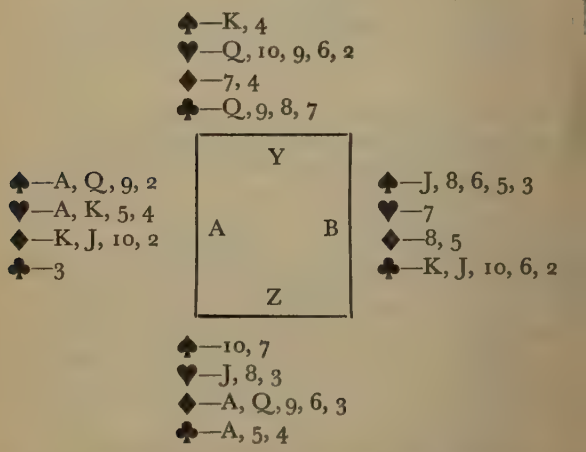
In the example given, Y's double was above the necessary minimum strength. He held three of each of the major suits, both of them strong, and he would have welcomed a major suit by his partner. Altogether he held six high cards,

not counting the Jacks. But the combination in Spades—A, Q, J—made his hand worth an extra trick.

If Y had elected to bid "Two No Trumps," he would not have got them. He would have been obliged to lead away from his strength all the time, and could not put Dummy in. At best he might have made six tricks, but more likely he would have made only five. This hand is a perfect answer to those who assert that it is better to bid "Two No Trumps" over the original No Trumper rather than double.

19. *Masked Double*

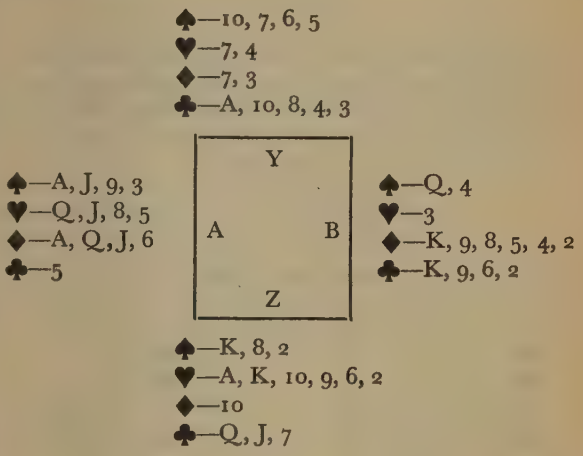
An illustration of the masked double explained in the "Informatory Double" chapter.



Score : game all. Y Z, 20 in rubber game. Z deals, and bids "One Diamond"; A, "Double"; Y, "No bid"; B, "Two Spades." All pass.

Z had to open. He did not like to lead from his Ace of Diamonds, so he started off with the Ace of Clubs, and followed with a Spade. B ran the Spade, and Y made the trick with the King. But Y Z made only one further trick, viz., Ace of Diamonds. B made the game and rubber.

How the masked double works is further illustrated by this hand :



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One Heart " ; A, " Double " ; Y, " No bid " ; B, " Two Diamonds."

If Z now bids " Two Hearts," A can either double for business or support the Diamonds. Y is powerless. If A doubles " Two Hearts," B should again bid his Diamonds, thereby assuring A of greater than normal length. B goes game in Diamonds, losing only one Heart and one Club. It is safe to say that but for the informatory double A B would not have won game and rubber on the hand. If A passes, neither Y nor B can make a bid.

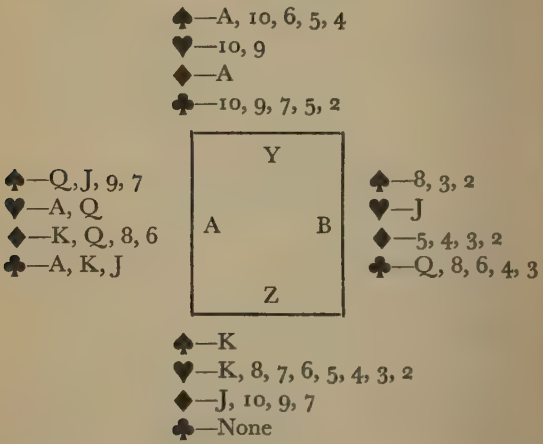
B could hardly bid two Diamonds on so weak a hand, if

his partner had passed the One Heart call. If A makes a No Trumper over the initial Heart bid, it is true, as the cards lie, he does well, but to bid it would be a leap in the dark.

Should Z venture to three Hearts over B's three Diamonds, A then has a substantial business double.

20. *Uncertainty of a Good-Looking Business Double*

As an example of how, with a good No Trump hand and two tricks in Declarer's suit, a promising-looking double can be defeated, the following hand has its interest.



Score : game all. A deals, and bids " One No Trump " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Two Hearts " ; A, " Two No Trumps " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Three Hearts " ; A, " Three No Trumps " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Four Hearts " ; A, " Double." All pass.

I give the bidding as it occurred. Z was, of course, an optimist or a flag-flier. From his point of view the game was gone in No Trumps, and his hand could only be useful if played in Hearts.

A's double looked absolutely sound and good. He expected to make two Heart tricks for certain, and at least two other tricks, and probably three, and possibly four.

But Z was fortunate in his Dummy.

A opened the King of Clubs. Z trumped, and led his King of Spades, then 7 of Diamonds, which Dummy took with the Ace. He then led Dummy's Ace of Spades, discarding the 9 of Diamonds. A small Spade led from Dummy was trumped by Z, who then led Jack of Diamonds, trumped in Dummy. Another Spade lead trumped enabled Z to trump his last Diamond in Dummy, and all A and B made were two tricks in Hearts !

Five by tricks doubled, and game and rubber for Z.

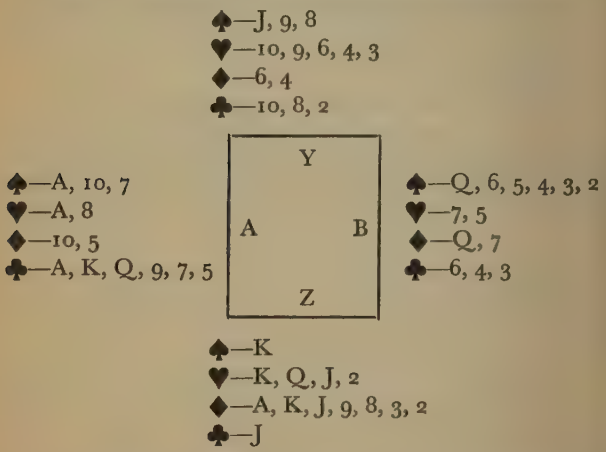
The moral is the absolute uncertainty of even a good-looking double. And yet there was nothing else for A to do. He could not have made even three No Trumps as the cards lay.

21. *Bad Re-double*

That it is seldom wise to re-double is a point at Bridge which is well known to experienced players. Some authorities go so far as to say, " Never re-double. Never, never."

I do not quite to that length but my advice is : Never re-double, even when you have a cast-iron certainty of getting your contract, unless by so doing you may drive your adversaries into a bid from which you can derive substantial penalties. The penalties must be substantial indeed to compensate you for missing your doubled contract.

Here is a case from actual play of a bad re-double :



Score : game all. Z dealt, and bid " Three Diamonds " ; A, " Four Clubs " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Four Diamonds " ; A, " Double " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Re-double " ; A, " Five Clubs " ; Y and B, " No bid " ; Z, " Five Diamonds " ; A, " Double." All pass.

Now this was very poor bidding. First of all, Z should

have bid initially "One Diamond" or "Four." A pre-emptive bid of three of a minor suit is seldom effective, and, as Z had every intention of bidding his hand up, he should have made a bid of four originally. A was justified in bidding "Four Clubs" on his hand, and when Z went to "Four Diamonds" it looked as if he had a promising double. But Z's re-double gave the show away. It made A realise that Z's hand must be freakish. So he took out the re-double and re-bid his Clubs. A could not have made five Clubs, but Z could not be certain of that, and in any case he was determined to play the hand in Diamonds.

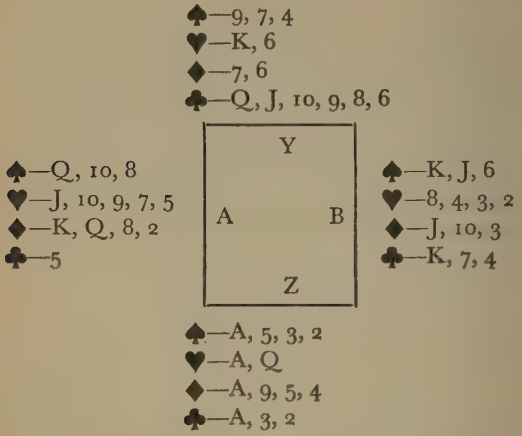
But he over-reached himself by his re-double and went one down on his contract, A making three tricks, viz. Ace of Spades, Ace of Hearts, and Ace of Clubs.

If Z had left in the first double he would have made game and rubber and a big score below the line.

Moral.—When you are on a good thing, be content, and do not spoil it by avarice.

22. *That First Trick*

The necessity of care at the first trick cannot be too strongly or too often emphasised. In the following example, Z missed a sitting game and rubber through failing to take stock of the position after the first lead.



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " Two No Trumps." All pass. A opens the Jack of Hearts, and Z carelessly puts up Dummy's King and leads the Queen of Clubs. B, of course, refuses to cover on first or second round of Clubs. His King had to fall on third round, but now the suit is blocked and Z cannot get into Dummy. In the event Z makes only the odd trick.

Z's play was obvious. He should have taken the first trick with the Ace of Hearts, leaving the King of Hearts as entry n Dummy. He should then have led the Ace of Clubs and ontinued until B made his King. Whatever B led then did not matter. Z was sure of game and rubber, with five tricks in Clubs, two in Hearts, one in Spades, and one in Diamonds. A bad break indeed !

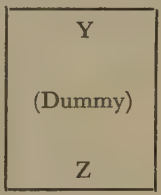
23. *The Hold-up*

Holding up an Ace to exhaust an adversary of a suit, or to prevent a long suit being made against one, is a point of play that is generally recognised. It is particularly valuable in the play of a No Trumper.

But many players who realise the importance of the hold-up of an Ace do not always practise it with a K, Q, suit. How necessary it is to sacrifice the taking of an immediate trick is exemplified by the following hand from actual play.

Here are the hands of Declarer and Dummy.

♠—3, 2
♥—A, 2
♦—2
♣—A, K, Q, 9, 7, 6, 5, 2



♠—K, Q, 4
♥—K, 9, 7
♦—A, J, 10, 9, 7, 5
♣—10

Score : game all. Z dealt, and bid " One Diamond " ; A, " One Spade " ; Y, " Three Clubs " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " Two No Trumps " ; A, " Three Spades " ; Y, " Three No Trumps " ; B, " Double " ; Z, " No bid " ; A, " Four Spades " ; Y, " Four No Trumps " ; B " Double." All pass.

A led the Jack of Spades, and Z made the fatal error of taking the first trick with his Queen. He then led a Club. A failed, and B got in with Jack of Clubs, and led a Spade

through Z's King. A made five tricks in the suit, which, with the Club trick, made Z 300 points down.

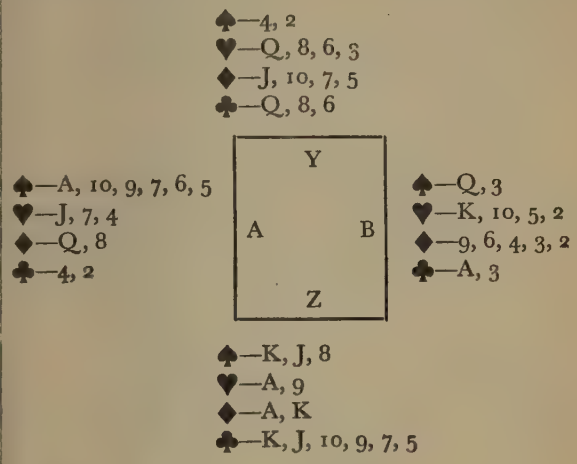
Now it should have been obvious to Z : (*a*) That A had at least six Spades. He might have had seven, in which case taking the first trick would not have hurt Z, as B could have had only one Spade ; (*b*) B was marked with a guard in Clubs on the double, and therefore Z could not afford to risk his having two Spades in his hand.

Had Z passed the first trick of Spades, he would effectually have held up the suit and exhausted B. A would have continued with it. Z had nothing to fear. He could allow B to make his trick in Clubs and, whatever B led, must make his contract with seven Clubs, one Spade, two Hearts, and one Diamond. Z would have scored 80 below the line, 80 above the line, and rubber points.

This slip was made by an experienced and usually careful player. Its moral is that it is never wise to take things for granted. Z thought that the Clubs must all be good. But he had no business to have thought so after B's double.

24. *The Hold-up*

While most players are alive to the necessity of holding up an Ace against an adverse suit at No Trumps in order to exhaust one of the opponents, many fail to see the necessity when they hold what may possibly be a double guard in the suit.



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump." All pass. A leads 7 of Spades ; B plays the Queen. What should Z play ?

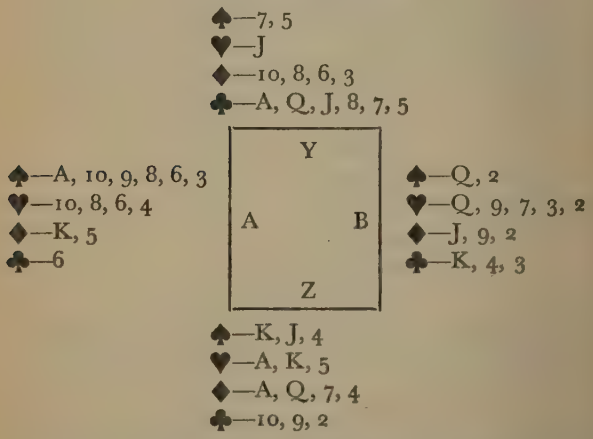
As you will see by examination of the hands, the whole issue as to whether Z makes game and rubber or only the odd trick depends upon his play to this first lead. If he plays the King he cannot go game. He must clear his Clubs. B gets in with the Ace, leads a Spade, and A and B make six tricks in all.

And yet how many players will you find who would play the 8 on that first trick ? They would argue that if they take with the King, their Jack is still potentially guarded, and

they may make a second trick in the suit. So they will if A has to lead it. But they forget the possibility that the Jack may be led through.

But, you may say, surely it is an even chance from Z's point of view that A holds the Ace of Clubs, in which case he is sacrificing a trick needlessly by refusing to overtake the Queen of Spades with his King. That is quite true. But, as Z does not know where the Ace of Clubs lies, he must play for safety. He must see that if B holds it his one chance of rubber is to exhaust B's Spades. The moral is that it is often wise to sacrifice a potential trick for greater profit.

25. *Holding up a King*



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump." All pass. A opens 8 of Spades ; B plays the Queen. Z must resist the temptation of putting up the King of Spades on the first trick, because he has to go for the Club finesse, and, if he finds the King in B's hand, his Spades will be led through. If A has led from six Spades, B can have had

originally only two. If A has led from five, B had three. In either case, Z must not take the first trick, as his aim must be to exhaust B's Spades. He must therefore play his 4 of Spades.

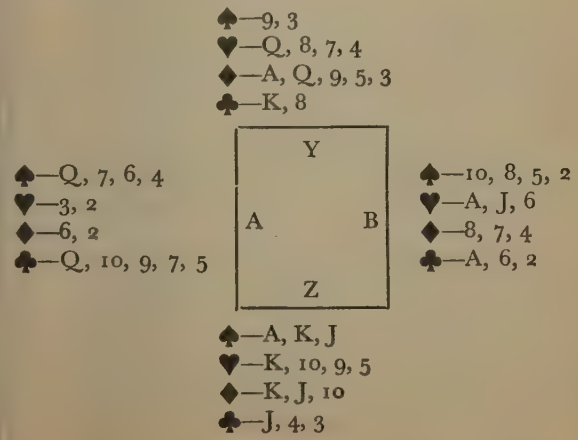
If B goes on with the Spades, Z has certain game. When B makes King of Clubs, if he returns a Diamond Z must put up his Ace and not finesse, as he cannot afford to allow A to get in. By this method of play he must make game with five Clubs, two Hearts, one Diamond, and a Spade.

26. *When Not to Hold Up an Ace*

It is a good and salutary rule that, playing as Declarer in a No Trump declaration, an Ace should be held up when possible to exhaust an adversary of the suit.

The defenders, too, should generally be chary of parting with an Ace too early in the play. But there are occasions when it is essential for saving the game that the Ace should go up at once. It is the mark of the good player to realise these particular situations.

Here is a case in point :



Score : game all. Z dealt, and bid " One No Trump." All pass. A led the 7 of Clubs. Dummy played the 8, B the Ace, and Z the 3.

B returned the suit, the trick being taken by Y with the King. At trick three, Z led Dummy's 4 of Hearts.

What should B play, and why ?

B must put up his Ace at once. The Eleven Rule and two first tricks show that A had three Clubs left, viz. Q, 10, 9, and those, with the two Aces, would save the game.

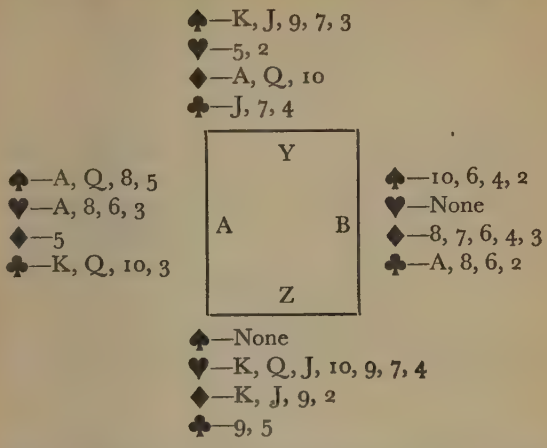
But, in actual play, B failed to realise the situation. Instead of putting up his Ace of Hearts, he played the 6, and Z played the King, which won.

Z then proceeded to make his winning Diamonds, which, with Ace, King of Spades, gave him game and rubber.

It was, of course, tempting for B, holding Ace, Jack of Hearts over Dummy's Queen, to pass the first Heart trick, as, if led again, he was certain of two tricks in the suit. He ought not, however, to have risked it, as by playing the Ace of Hearts at once and returning the Clubs he had a certainty of saving game and rubber.

27. *Leading a Singleton*

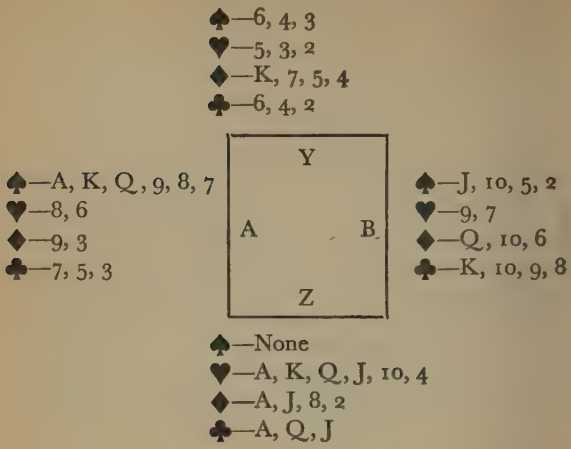
This hand illustrates the intelligent use of a singleton.



Score : game all. Z dealt, and bid " Three Hearts," which held. A led the King of Clubs. When this made, he immediately placed the Ace with his partner. Instead of going on with the Clubs, as many players would have done, he led his singleton Diamond, which was won in Dummy with the Ace. A won the Heart trick which followed with his Ace, and led a small Club. B, winning with the Ace, returned a small Diamond, which A trumped, thus saving the game.

How did A know, when his King of Clubs took the first trick, that his partner held the Ace ? Because if Z had held the Ace he must, with three to the Jack in Dummy, take the first trick with it. A's plan would have been defeated if Z had held a singleton Club. But, as it was, he took the best chance of saving the game, as he rightly read Z on the bidding and Dummy's holding as probably bare in Spades, and he could not rely upon making a Spade trick at all.

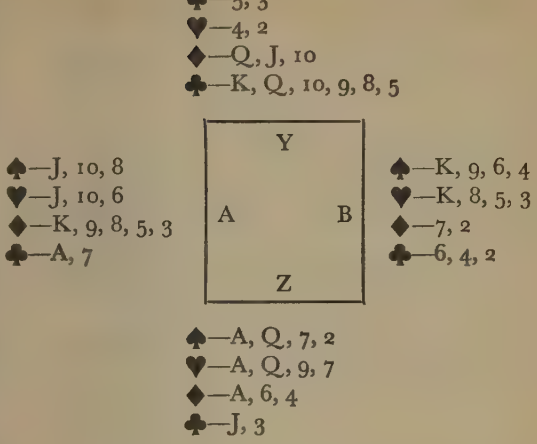
28. *Cards of Hidden Entry*



Z bid "Four Hearts." How can he make a grand slam? To make grand slam it is necessary to put Dummy in three times. Dummy has only one obvious card of entry, the King of Diamonds, but he has two hidden entries, the 5 of Hearts and the 7 of Diamonds. Z must ruff the first trick with the 10 of Hearts, lead out two rounds of trumps, exhausting the adversaries, and put Dummy in with the 5 of Hearts, and lead a Club and finesse the Jack. He then leads 8 of Diamonds (not his 2), puts up Dummy's King, and leads 4 of Diamonds, finessing the Jack. He puts Dummy in with the 7 of Diamonds on the fourth round and leads another Club, finesses the Queen, and makes grand slam.

Always be on the look-out for cards of hidden entry.

29. *Making an Entry in Dummy*



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump." All pass.

A opens the 5 of Diamonds.

Certainty of making game depends upon Z's play to the first trick. He must not allow Dummy to win with the 10 of Diamonds, *but must take with the Ace in his own hand !*

He must then lead Jack of Clubs, which A allows to win, and follow with the 3 of Clubs, which A is compelled to take.

Whatever A now leads Z has the game for certain. If he leads his King and another Diamond, Z makes five Clubs, two Diamonds, and his two Aces, without the necessity of taking a finesse.

If A leads Spades or Hearts, Z does still better, as he must get in at once and lead a Diamond himself.

As played, however, Z just missed it. He allowed Dummy to take the first trick and then led Clubs from Dummy. A took the second Club trick, and led Jack of Spades. Z got in with his Queen, and led 4 of Diamonds, hoping A would pass it.

But A, of course, popped up his King and continued with the 10 of Spades.

Z had now no hope of getting into Dummy, as his Ace of Diamonds blocked his entry.

He passed A's 10 of Spades, but he was no better off. A continued the suit, and Z took the third round with his Ace.

He was now obliged to lead away from his Hearts, with the result that he made only one trick in Clubs, two in Diamonds, two in Spades, and two in Hearts.

A disastrous result when game and rubber were to be obtained by proper play !

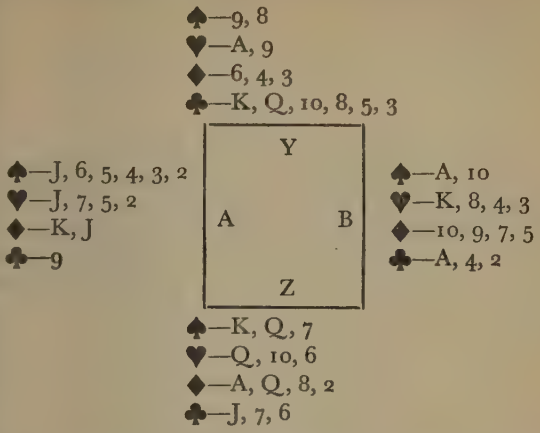
30. *Kill the Card of Entry*

While it is a good and salutary rule against a No Trumper that a player should return his partner's lead at once, unless he has in his hand the saving of the game or the breaking of the contract, there are occasions when other considerations come in.

It sometimes happens that Dummy has a long suit, which can be stopped or held up by an opponent, and a card of entry. In such a case it is imperative that the card of entry should be taken out at the first available opportunity, even though the taking out of the card of entry may involve a loss of a possible trick.

By the sacrifice of one trick, three or four others are often saved.

The following example illustrates the point of how the game can be defeated by alert defensive play.



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump." All pass. A opens the 4 of Spades, and B takes the trick with the Ace. How should B play ?

Most players in this position would return the 10 of Spades and hope to save the game. But, as you can see readily, if B returns the Spade, Z must make game and rubber, without taking any finesse or risk, with five tricks in Clubs, two in Spades, one in Diamonds, and one in Hearts. No play on the part of B can stop it if he returns the Spade at trick two.

A closer study of the situation, however, will reveal that B has the saving of the game if only he can kill Dummy's hand. This is the way he can do it.

At trick two, instead of returning his partner's lead he must play the King of Hearts. Z is obliged to take it with Dummy's Ace. If he does not take it, that makes no difference, as B continues the suit and forces out the Ace.

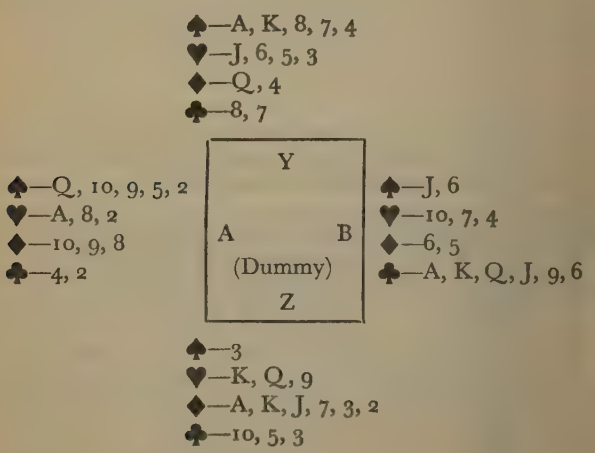
Z then leads out Clubs. B holds up the Ace until the third round, thereby preventing the making of the long Club suit. When he is in with the Ace of Clubs he leads his 10 of Spades.

However Z plays now, he cannot go game.

31. *Killing Dummy's Entries*

How bad defensive play can lose tricks is exemplified by the following instance, which occurred at a London club.

Score : game all. A B, 12 in rubber game. Z dealt, and called " One Diamond " ; A, " No bid " ; Y, " One Spade " ; B, " *Three* Clubs " ; Z, " Double." All pass. Here are the hands.



Z opened the King of Diamonds, and then led 3 of Spades. Y took the trick with the King, and led the Queen of Diamonds. This making, he led the Ace of Spades, and

followed with a small Spade. B trumped with the Jack of Clubs, and led out three winning trumps, put Dummy in with the Ace of Hearts, and discarded his losing Hearts on Dummy's winning Spades, making his doubled contract game and rubber.

It is easy to see, when you have all four hands given, that B ought to have been two down, but could Y, to whose bad play the disaster was due, tell ?

Of course he could. It was a Bridge crime to clear Spades while the Ace of Hearts was in Dummy. Z's lead of the 3 was an obvious singleton, as the 2 of Spades was in Dummy. If Y had wanted to give Z a ruff he should have led a small Spade on second round and not played out his Ace.

The fact that B had called " Three Clubs " marked him with great length in the suit. Y's obvious lead, as soon as he had played out the Queen of Diamonds, was a Heart, to try and extract Dummy's only card of entry. After that was out it did not matter if Spades were cleared, as B could never put Dummy in.

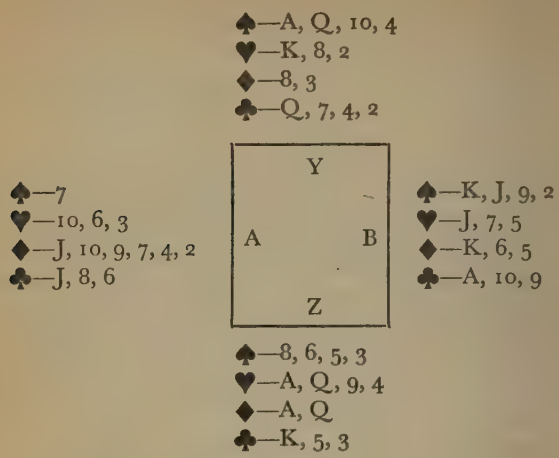
Y's excuse that he thought Z could over-ruff B was bad. If Z had a winning trump, he did not require Y's assistance to make it. The only situation when Y's lead could have helped would have been if Z had Queen and one other Club, or the King bare. But the truth is, Y had not thought the matter out, or he would not have taken the risk when the Heart lead was so plainly indicated.

32. *Finesses Last*

It is often impossible to dogmatise at Bridge as to how a hand should be played. One's judgment is always apt to be clouded by the way in which the cards actually lay, which we do not know until too late.

But there is one principle in play that should be borne in mind, and that is, do not go for a doubtful finesse if you can see possibility of game by any other means.

The following case illustrates the point :



Score : game all. Y Z, 16 in rubber game. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump." All pass.

Z can make game with two Spades, three Hearts, two Diamonds, and one Club if the King of Spades is with A. Or he can make game with one Spade, two Diamonds, one Club, and four Hearts if the opposing Hearts are divided equally.

Which ought he to try first ?

A opened the Jack of Diamonds. After winning the first trick with the Queen of Diamonds, Z led a Spade and finessed the Queen. B took the trick and cleared the Diamonds. Z then made his four Hearts and led another Spade. Finding A void of the suit, Z put up Dummy's Ace and led a Club. But it was too late. B played his Ace and led a Diamond, and Z only just made his contract of " One No Trump."

Now Z had certain game and rubber if he had not taken

the fatal Spade finesse. His play should have been as follows :

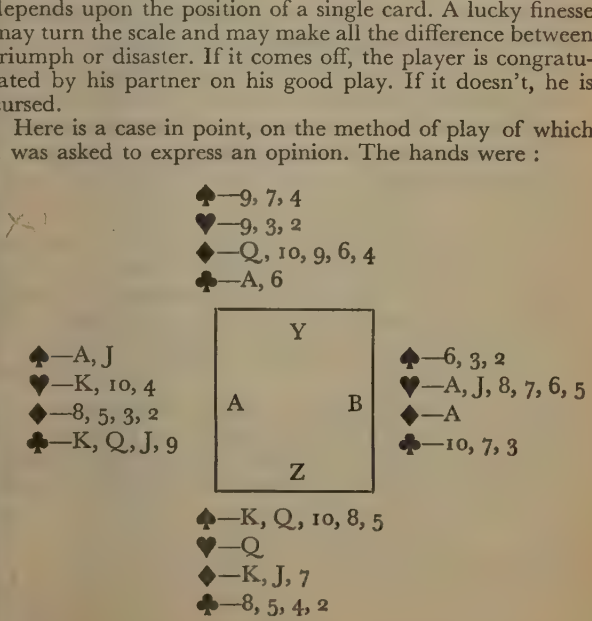
After winning the first Diamond trick, he should have played the Hearts. Then he should have established a trick in Clubs, and the game and the rubber must have been won with four Hearts, two Diamonds, one Club, and a Spade.

It is the old story which seems to need telling again and again. A finesse is the *last* way in which to try for the extra trick. It must be kept in reserve, and only used if other possible ways fail.

33. *Disastrous Finesse*

It often happens that the making of a contract or game depends upon the position of a single card. A lucky finesse may turn the scale and may make all the difference between triumph or disaster. If it comes off, the player is congratulated by his partner on his good play. If it doesn't, he is cursed.

Here is a case in point, on the method of play of which I was asked to express an opinion. The hands were :



The bidding, which was rather extraordinary, went as follows :

Score : game all. Z, " One Spade " ; A, " Two Clubs " ; Y, " Two Spades " ; B, " Three Hearts " ; Z, " Three Spades " ; A, " No bid " ; Y, " No bid " ; B, " Double." All pass.

A opened with the King of Hearts, which made, and followed with the 10. Z trumped, and led King of Spades, which A took with the Ace. A then led the King of Clubs, which Z took with Dummy's Ace. Z led Dummy's 9 of Spades and finessed it, A thus making his Jack. A made his Queen of Clubs and followed with his 4 of Hearts, which Z trumped. Z led his King of Diamonds, which B took with the Ace.

At this point Z had only one Spade left in his hand and one in Dummy. B led 10 of Clubs, which Z trumped in Dummy, following with 4 of Diamonds, which B trumped with his last Spade. B had now nothing but Hearts to lead. Z trumped in with his Queen of Spades, and made the rest of the tricks. But he had lost six tricks, and was two down (200 points) on his doubled contract.

As the hand was played, the whole muddle that Z made arose from his finessing at trick five. He argued that, as B had doubled, he probably had the Jack of Spades.

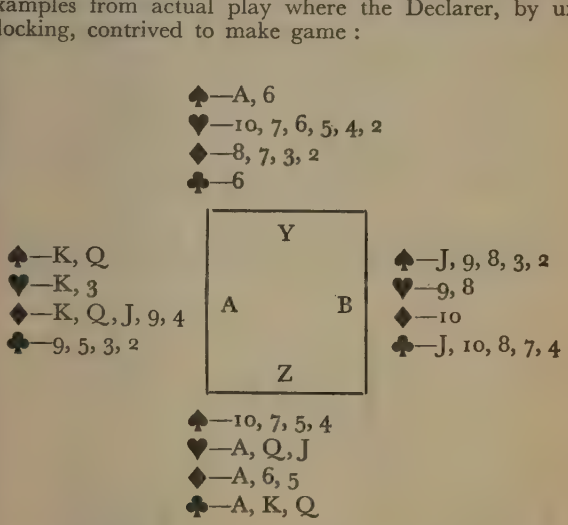
If he had not finessed he could have made his contract, losing only one Spade, one Heart, one Diamond, and a Club. The point of his play was, after two rounds of Spades, to clear his Diamonds before taking out Dummy's last trump. He must keep the trump in order to ruff if a Club is led by B. If a Club is not led, Z gets rid of his two losing Clubs on the Diamonds.

The hand is interesting as an instance of bad calling and faulty play. A would have been justified in supporting his partner's Hearts up to four. B's double was distinctly bad. But the probability is that, if he had not doubled, Z would have made his contract.

34. *Unblocking*

The necessity of getting rid of a card which blocks a suit is a point of play which is often missed by even experienced players.

Sometimes it is impossible to get rid of the blocking card, but often by a little ingenuity it can be done. Here are two examples from actual play where the Declarer, by unblocking, contrived to make game :



Score : Y Z, 18 in first game ; A B, *nil*. Y deals, and says " No bid " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " One No Trump." All pass.

Personally I think it was unwise of Y not to bid " Two Hearts " over the No Trumper. But Y was one of those obstinate people who do not believe in taking out a No Trumper, so I give the bidding as it occurred.

A leads the King of Diamonds, which Z allows to make, and follows with the Queen, which he takes with the Ace, B discarding the 4 of Clubs.

Z has his contract safe with two Hearts, three Clubs, a Diamond, and a Spade. But this is insufficient for game. The problem is how to make the eighth trick with the 10 of Hearts, as Z's Hearts blocked the suit.

This was how he did it :

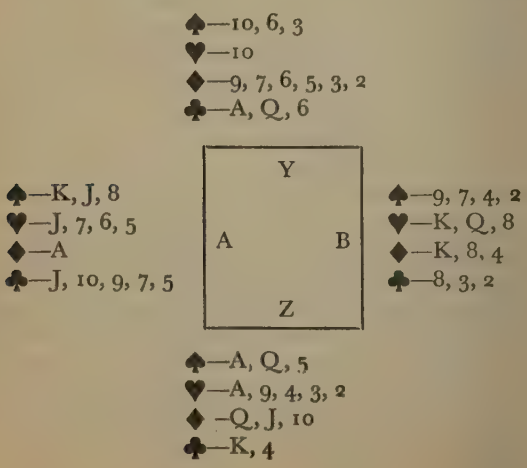
At trick three he led the Ace of Hearts, and followed with the Queen, which A was obliged to take.

A could now have circumvented Z by leading Spades, but he did not do so. For one thing, he was not certain that Z held the Jack of Hearts, and, for another, he thought he should make his Diamonds at once while he was in, as his partner could not put him in on the suit.

So he led out his Diamonds. On the fourth round of Diamonds Z discarded his Jack of Hearts, using the Ace of Spades later as entry for Dummy's suit.

He therefore made game, losing four Diamonds and a Heart.

The second case was as follows : Z dealt at love all in the rubber game, and bid " One No Trump." All pass.



A's lead was the Jack of Clubs, which Z took with his King. He had only six " surface " tricks, with the seventh if the King of Spades lay with B. But a better scheme was to establish Diamonds, provided he could unblock, his lowest card being higher than Dummy's best.

He started the Diamonds, A winning and continuing Clubs. Dummy went on with the Diamonds. B's King took that trick, and he led his last Club, on which Z threw his *Jack* of Diamonds.

The lead was now in Dummy, and four Diamond tricks followed, which gave the game with one Spade, one Heart, and three Clubs.

At double Dummy, of course, B could have defeated the manœuvre.

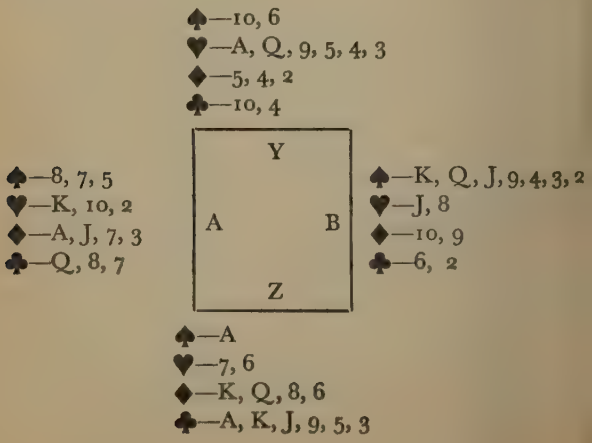
35. "*Killing*" *Cards*

I notice on the part of many players a very great objection to "killing" cards in Dummy when the process involves their partners ruffing and being over-ruffed by Declarer. This situation constantly arises. Leader opens an A, K suit, and, after playing his winners, the Queen is good in Dummy. But he knows that neither his partner nor Declarer has any more of the suit. Will he lead it, and let his partner kill the Queen? Not a bit of it. He allows that good Queen to stand, and later, when trumps have been drawn, Declarer makes her, and discards a loser on her.

The explanation is always the same: "I knew you had no more, partner, but if I had led the suit and you had ruffed you would only have been over-ruffed, and I did not want to put you 'under the hammer.'"

This "under the hammer" idea is a bit of a fetish. With Declarer's strength in trumps against you, don't be afraid of putting your partner "under the hammer." In most cases it is valuable play.

Here is a case:



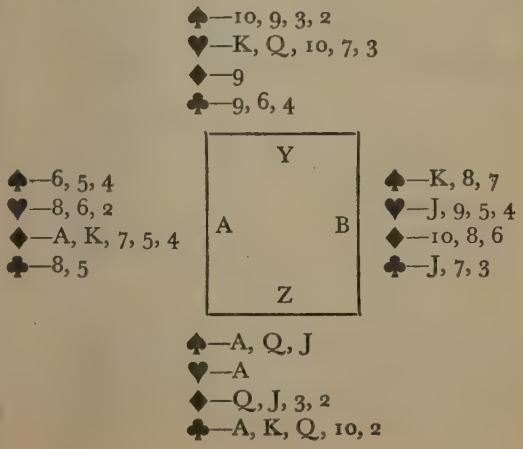
Score : game all. Y Z, 16 in rubber game. Final call, " Four Spades " by B, doubled by Z.

Z opened King of Clubs. After Dummy went down most players would have stopped Clubs, fearing to establish Dummy's Queen, and would have led a Heart. But Z led a second round of Clubs, and then, of course, discovered that neither his partner nor Declarer had any more of the suit. He therefore led a third round for his partner to ruff, to kill Dummy's Queen and to avoid giving B the opportunity of discarding a loser. By doing this he made an extra trick.

When Dummy has an established card and also sure reentry, do your best to kill that card before you relinquish the lead.

36. *Wrong Discard*

How much hinges on a single inconsidered or careless discard is illustrated by the following hand, where a game was lost by discarding the 6 instead of the 8 of Diamonds.



Score : game all. Z dealt, and bid " One No Trump." All pass. A opened the 5 of Diamonds, Y played the 9, B the 10, and Z took with the Queen of Diamonds. Z now played out five rounds of Clubs. At trick five B discarded the 7 of Spades, and at trick six the 6 of Diamonds. Z now led out his Ace of Hearts, and then his Ace and Queen of Spades. At trick nine B was in with the King of Spades. Trick ten, B leads 8 of Diamonds, Z plays the 3, and A the King. Trick eleven, A wins with the Ace of Diamonds, and now has nothing to lead but a Diamond, and Z wins the two remaining tricks with the Jack of Diamonds and the Jack of Spades, making four by cards, game and rubber.

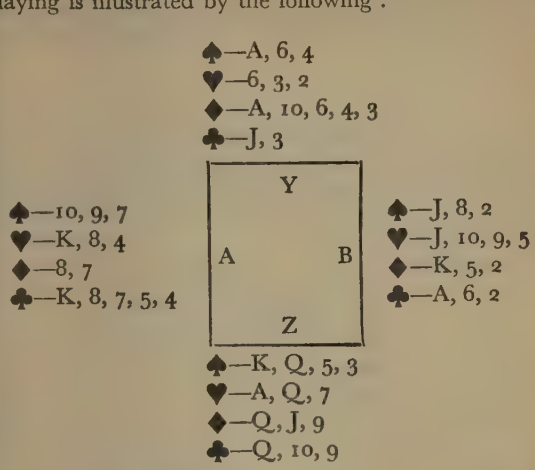
At trick six, B lost two tricks by discarding the 6 of Diamonds instead of the 8, contravening the general rule that when you can keep only one of your partner's suit to lead back to him a low card is more likely to be useful than a higher card.

If B had discarded the 8 of Diamonds on this trick, when he got in with the King of Spades he would have led the 6 of Diamonds. However Z played then, A, by taking over, must win the last three tricks. A B would therefore have made the King of Spades and four Diamonds, and the game would have been saved.

On such apparently small matters big issues often hang. One wrong discard and the game is thrown away.

37. "*Ducking*"

What the Americans call "ducking" and we call underplaying is illustrated by the following :



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids "One No Trump." All pass.

A opens 5 of Clubs, taken by B with the Ace, Z playing the 9. B leads 6 of Clubs. Z plays the 10.

A should allow Z to win the trick, thus unblocking three Club tricks, while B has a Club in his hand.

In actual play, A took the second Club trick and led another, putting Z in, relying on his King of Hearts as an entry. Z led Queen of Diamonds, ran it, and B took with his King.

B had not now a Club to lead, but led his Jack of Hearts. Z put up his Ace, made his Diamonds and Spades, game and rubber, with four Diamonds, four Spades, a Heart, and a Club.

Now mark the difference if A had "ducked" at trick two. Z is in the lead, and must go for his Diamonds or play out

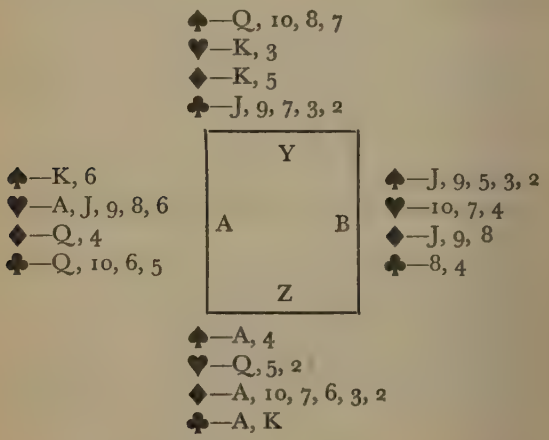
his Spades. Whichever he does first, it does not matter. I must get in with King of Diamonds sooner or later and lead a Club, with the result that A B save the game with four tricks in Clubs and one in Diamonds.

Be on the look-out for similar situations, and "duck" at the right moment!

38. "*Ducking*"

At No Trumps, "ducking" is frequently necessary, and it may sometimes be useful in playing a suit declaration. The principle is to sacrifice an immediate trick in order to make several tricks later.

Here is a case:

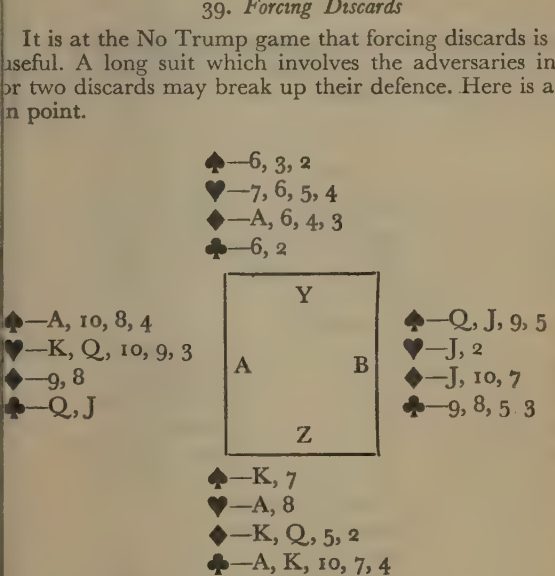


Z is playing No Trumps. A leads 8 of Hearts, which Dummy wins with the King. Z now fears a lead through the Queen of Hearts. He should, therefore, lead the King and a small Diamond, "ducking" the second round in hope of placing the lead with A.

If A continues Hearts, as he is likely to do, having King of Spades as re-entry, Z is sure of game ; whereas if Z plays the Ace of Diamonds on second round, and goes for clearing them, B gets in, puts the Heart through Z's Queen, and the game is saved.

39. *Forcing Discards*

It is at the No Trump game that forcing discards is most useful. A long suit which involves the adversaries in one or two discards may break up their defence. Here is a case in point.



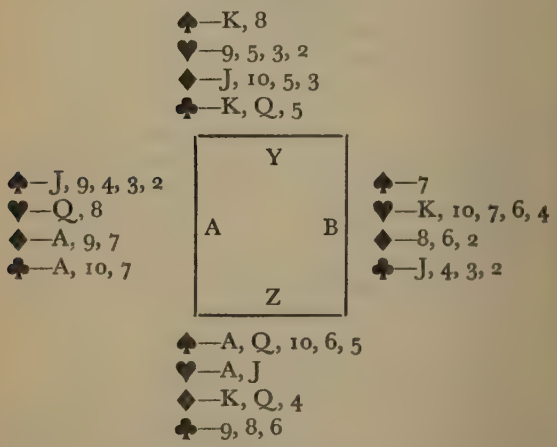
Score : game all. Z dealt, and bid " One No Trump." All pass. A opened the King of Hearts and Z won with the Ace. He then proceeded to make four tricks in Diamonds, giving A two discards and B one discard. A discarded 8 and then 4 of Spades to show his Ace, and B discarded, unfortunately, the 3 of Clubs. Consequently, Z made all his five Clubs.

The hand is interesting because it shows the hazard of the discard. If B had not discarded a Club, the game would have been saved.

Was there anything to guide B and tell him not to discard a Club? I think his partner's discards should have done so. When A "petered" in Spades, showing he held the suit guarded, B should have let go one of his Spades; obviously he must keep a Heart in case he got in to lead to his partner.

It is true that a suit of four to the nine does not look like being a guard, but it is on little matters like this that the fate of a game often hangs.

40. *Dodging a Force!*



Score: A B, 12. Y Z, 10 in rubber game. Z deals, and calls "One Spade"; A, "One No Trump"; Y, "Two Spades"; B, "Three Hearts"; Z, "Three Spades"; A, "Double." All pass.

Trick one. A leads Queen of Hearts, on which Z plays he Jack.

Trick two. A leads another Heart. Z wins.

Trick three. Z leads 10 of Spades. A covers with the Jack (if A does not cover, Z finesses the 10). Y wins with the King.

Trick four. Y leads 8 of Spades, on which Z plays the 5. A wins with the 9.

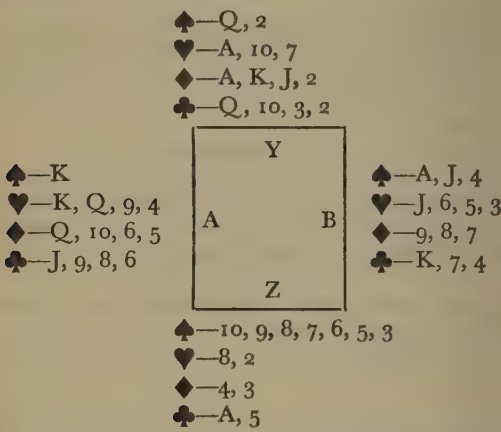
A can now only make his two Aces. Z draws the trumps as soon as he gets in. If Z wins the first trick, he cannot make his contract, as A, on getting in at trick four, leads a Heart. B wins with the King and continues with 10, forcing a trump from Z.

Z's hold-up of the Ace of Hearts at trick one was good. Of course, he took a risk of A's Queen of Hearts being a singleton, but he had nothing to lose by the play. Whether at trick three A should have covered the 10 of Spades is doubtful. If he doesn't, it makes the game more awkward for Z.

The point of the play is that Z must avoid allowing himself to be forced in Hearts.

41. *The Crash*

Opportunities of brilliant play and bringing off a coup do not occur very often. But there are occasions when what is known as the " crash " may be brought off. The "crash" consists in making adversaries' high cards fall together, and it requires a nice discernment to realise when the chance exists. Here is an example :



Score : game all ; love all in rubber game. Y dealt, and bid " One No Trump " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " Two Spades." All pass.

Seeing all four hands, you may say that it was impossible for Z to go game. He must lose at least three tricks in Spades and one in Clubs. For all Z knew, he might do worse and lose three Spades, one Club, and one Heart.

But now let me tell you how it went.

A opened the King of Hearts. Z put up Dummy's Ace and led a small Club, and took the trick with his Ace. He then led 4 of Diamonds, finessed Dummy's Jack, and played out Ace and King, discarding the losing Heart on the third round.

His next lead was the Queen of Spades. B put up the ce, and A's lone King fell, and Z lost only two tricks in pades and one Club, making game and rubber.

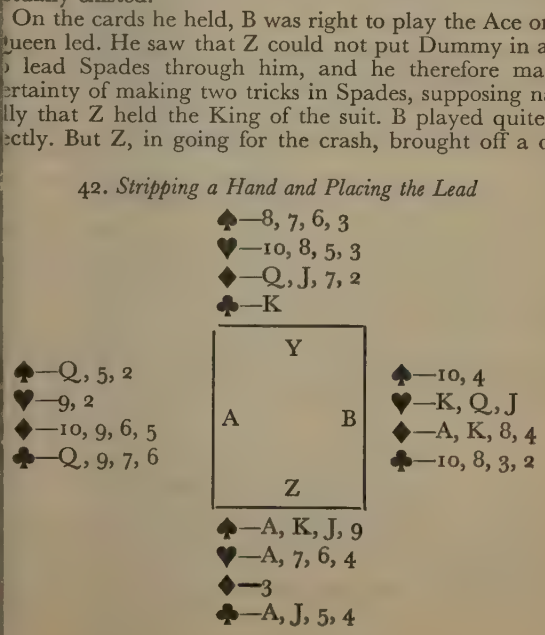
Analyse the play of this hand. In the first instance, Z was f course lucky in finding the Diamond finesse successful, that he could get rid of his losing Heart. If it did not me off, he was still no worse off than he would have been he had not tried it.

But the really clever play was the Queen of Spades from ummy. Most players would have led a small one, or ould have put themselves in and led Spades from their wn hand to Dummy's Queen.

Z, however, saw the possibility of such a distribution as ctually existed.

On the cards he held, B was right to play the Ace on the ueen led. He saw that Z could not put Dummy in again lead Spades through him, and he therefore made a rtainty of making two tricks in Spades, supposing natur-lly that Z held the King of the suit. B played quite cor-ectly. But Z, in going for the crash, brought off a coup.

42. *Stripping a Hand and Placing the Lead*



Score : game all. B deals, and bids " One Diamond " : Z, " One Spade." All pass. A leads 10 of Diamonds, Y covers with the Jack, and B takes the trick with the King.

B leads King of Hearts, which Z allows to make, and then the Ace of Diamonds, which Z trumps with the 9 of Spades. Z then leads Ace and King of Spades, following with a small Club, which puts Dummy in. The winning Diamond is led from Dummy, Z discarding a Heart. Z then leads Y's last Diamond, and trumps it with the Jack of Spades. Z next leads the Ace of Hearts, and, this making, he leads a small Club for Dummy to trump with the 7 of Spades. Z then leads Dummy's 8 of Spades, discarding a losing Heart. A has now nothing but Clubs to lead, with the result that Z makes both the Ace and Jack, four by cards, game, and rubber.

Looking at the four hands, it would seem impossible for Z to go game. He must lose, it would seem, one Diamond one Spade, and two Hearts, if not a Club trick.

While Z played the hand extremely well, B certainly helped him by playing out the Ace of Diamonds. With the Queen to 4 on the table, B should not have cleared the suit. But I wonder how many people would have played the hand as Z did. I think the obvious and natural play would have been for Z at trick 4 to lead a Club, put Dummy in and try the Spade finesse. But in this case Z could not have gone game. As it was he made all four of his trumps and one of Dummy's separately.

The point to notice is that Z " stripped " A's hand and placed the lead at the right moment, so that A was obliged to lead up to his tenace in Clubs.

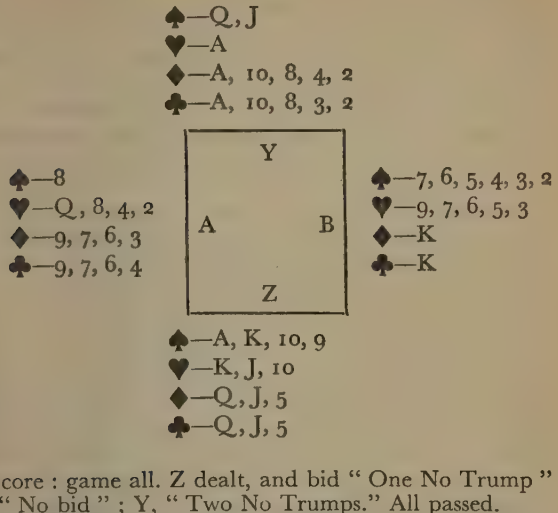
43. *Grand Slam by Inference*

One of the best examples of use of inference from play was given by Mr. Milton Work, and occurred, I believe, in actual play.

By simple and intelligent inferences from the opening lead and the fall of the cards after the third trick, the Declarer

vas able to place with absolute accuracy the cards of his wo opponents.

Here are the hands :



Score : game all. Z dealt, and bid " One No Trump " ; A, " No bid " ; Y, " Two No Trumps." All passed.

A opened the 2 of Hearts, showing Z that A had a four card suit, and that his suit is only Queen high, as Declarer and Dummy have K, J, 10, and A.

First important deduction : that A has led from his best suit, and therefore has no suit stronger or longer than his Hearts.

Trick two : Z leads Spades from Dummy and overtakes in his own hand, so as to put himself in the lead to finesse either Diamonds or Clubs. But when A plays the 8 of Spades, Z draws further deductions. The 8 of Spades is either a false card or it is a singleton. So Z has another round of Spades to make sure, and, when A fails to follow suit, *Z now marks B with two singleton Kings, Diamonds and Clubs.*

RB

The deduction is reached by the following reasoning. A having but a single Spade and no five card suit, must have held originally three four card suits—Hearts, Diamonds and Clubs. If his Diamonds or Clubs had been King high A would have opened a King suit in preference to a Queen high suit. Z and Y together have eight Diamonds and eight Clubs. As neither the King of Diamonds nor the King of Clubs is in the Dummy or in Z's hand, and as neither can be held by A, therefore B must have two singleton Kings.

Z now refuses both the finesses and makes a grand slam. Pretty work ! And I wonder how many players would be able to discover the position during play ?

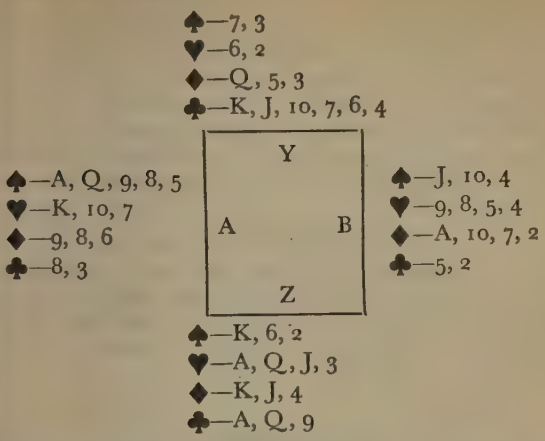
You may, of course, say it was not a certainty. A *might* have opened from a Queen high suit while possessing a suit King high. He might. But the point is that he probably would not. And the idea is that by deduction Z was able to arrive at the true position. As Mr. Milton Work says : " If an amateur should see his partner open with the 2 of Hearts against Declarer's No Trump contract, and then refuse Spades on the third trick, and if the Declarer should then turn to the amateur and say, ' I see you have the King of Diamonds and the King of Clubs, both singletons,' probably the amateur would be inclined to look at the backs of his cards to see how they were marked. And yet such inferences, quick and sure, were open to the Declarer without the help of any abnormal or unusual distribution of the cards or development of the play."

44. *Camouflage*

When you are in the position of Declarer, and have to play the two hands against skilful opponents, you want to ask yourself : " How will my method of play affect them ? "

You do not want them to " read " your hand too accurately, and it is therefore open to you to resort to any ruses which are likely to put them off.

Here is an instance :



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump." All pass. A leads 8 of Spades, B plays the 10, and Z takes the trick with the King.

Z then plays his Ace and Queen of Clubs, followed by the King of Diamonds.

B, who holds the Ace of Diamonds, does not put it up. " No, you don't," he thinks to himself. " I can see your little game. You haven't got another Club in your hand to put Dummy in, and you are trying to establish the Queen of Diamonds as a card of entry. I'm not going to fall into your trap and play my Ace for you."

So he allows the Declarer's King of Diamonds to make, which is exactly what Z hoped and anticipated.

Z is now quite happy. He is not foolish enough to lead another Diamond. He sees the game, one trick in Diamonds, six tricks in Clubs, one in Spades, and the Ace of Hearts.

An average player would not have thought of this simple dodge. He would have played out Clubs, and then led a Heart from Dummy and finessed it. If the Heart finesse went wrong, he would only make two tricks instead of game,

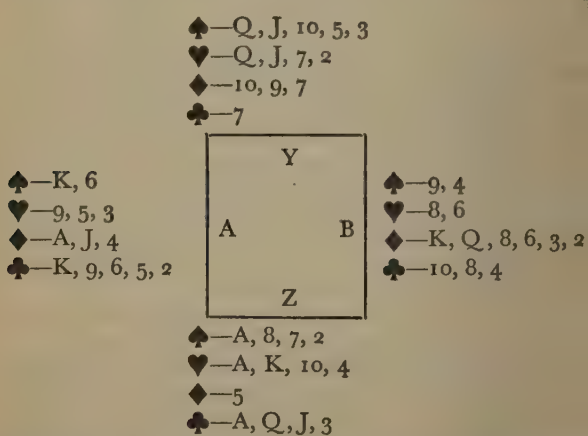
as presumably A would discard his Diamonds on the Clubs and keep his King of Hearts guarded. If, after the Clubs were played, he led a Diamond, the Ace would go up at once, for a certainty, and the adversaries would save the game with four Spade tricks and the Ace of Diamonds.

The point is that the Declarer took the best chance of making game. Of course, if third player had put up his Ace and returned a Spade, the game would have been saved. But Z felt practically certain that he would not do so.

45. *Deceiving the Adversaries*

When an adversary plays false cards he runs great risks, as he is likely to deceive his partner as well as, or perhaps instead of, the Declarer. But the Declarer is entitled to play his cards in any way he pleases to induce his opponents to make the wrong deductions.

Here is a case :



Score : love all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump." All pass. A opens the five of Clubs. Z, before playing to the first trick, sees that (1) the adversaries hold all the winning

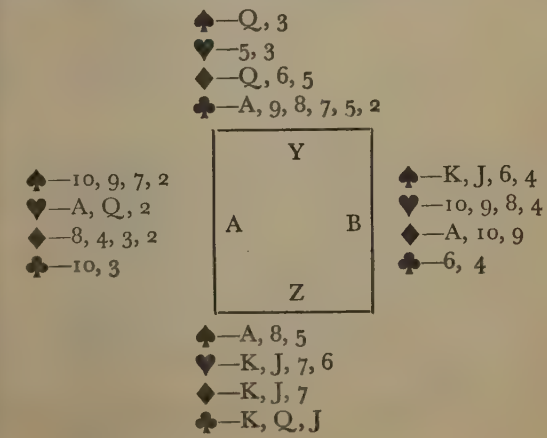
Diamonds ; (2) that to go game he must catch or finesse against the King of Spades ; (3) that if the finesse is unsuccessful, A B will not only save the game, but may actually defeat the contract. His best chance of preventing this is, therefore, to try to tempt the opponents to continue the Club suit. With this end in view, when B plays the ten of Clubs, Z, instead of taking it in the natural way with the Jack or Queen, plays the Ace.

A therefore logically concludes that B holds Queen and Jack of Clubs. Z then plays a small Heart to put Dummy in, leads the Queen of Spades, and runs it. A gets in with his King, leads his two of Clubs, and Z makes four by cards.

This, of course, looks simple enough when you have it all put down and see all four hands. But how many players in Z's position would work it out quickly in play ?

46. *Fooling the Enemy*

As an example of strategy and clever insight into an opponent's mental process, and doing the right thing at the right moment, the following example of a hand played at the Portland Club is well worth recording.



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump." All pass. A opens the 2 of Spades, Z puts up Dummy's Queen, B plays the King, and Z takes the trick with the Ace.

(Note that A, by his play of the 2, has shown only four of the suit, so that there is no object in Z holding up the Ace, as he cannot exhaust B's Spades.)

Z now takes stock of the position. He can see his contract, and probably eight tricks, but no more, because the adversaries must make three tricks in Spades and their two Aces.

Is there any way of making the game and rubber ?

There is only one chance, and that is by creating an impression in his adversaries' mind that he has not the Club suit solid, and requires an entry in Dummy to make the long Clubs.

This is how it was done. Z led the King and then the Queen of Clubs, and, as both followed suit, neither was aware that the other was now void of Clubs. Having established the impression he desired that he had no more Clubs, Z made that impression a certainty in the minds of his opponents by leading out the King of Diamonds, as if in the hope that the adversaries, by playing the Ace of Diamonds, would establish Dummy's Queen of Diamonds as a card of re-entry for the Clubs. B, who was a very good player, was completely fooled by Z's strategy, and refused to win the King of Diamonds.

Z therefore now led Jack of Diamonds, and B, still under the spell of Z's play, again refused to play the Ace !

Z had now accomplished his object. He had made his necessary two tricks in Diamonds and led his Jack of Clubs, overtaking in Y's hand with the Ace.

In this way he won game and rubber, scoring six Clubs, two Diamonds, and one Spade trick.

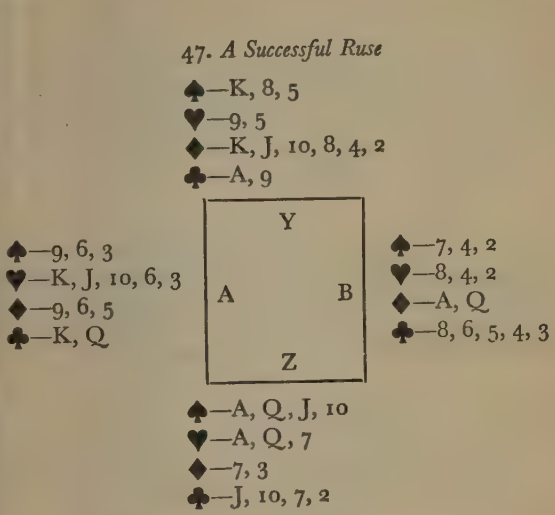
It was good play on the part of Z, and particularly clever because B had no possible way of detecting the strategy. B did not, of course, know that A held Ace and Queen of Hearts.

It is exceptional play of this character that makes Auction Bridge such a wonderful game, and a source of delight, not

only to the expert, but to all classes of players, good, bad, or indifferent.

A hand that is finely played or bid is just as much a masterpiece as a work of art, and carries just as much appeal.

47. *A Successful Ruse*



Score : game all, love all. Z deals, and bids " One No Trump " ; A, " Two Hearts " ; Y, " Three Diamonds " ; B, " No bid " ; Z, " Three No Trumps." All pass.

A leads the Jack of Hearts.

Z takes with the Queen, and leads a Diamond, finessing the 10. B, hoping that Z will be tempted by prospect of a small slam to play the Ace of Hearts on second round, takes with the Ace and not the Queen.

B returns a Heart, and Z, thinking he is now certain to make all his Diamonds, puts up the Ace of Hearts at once, leads his Diamond, and plays Dummy's Jack, which, to his astonishment, is won by B with the Queen.

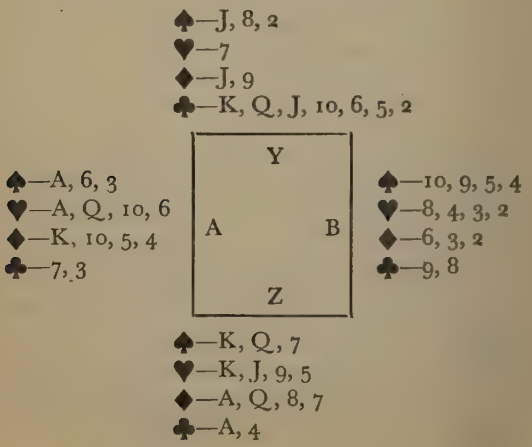
B now leads a Heart, and A makes three tricks in the suit and the rubber is saved.

Do you see the point?

If B had taken the first Diamond trick with the Queen and returned a Heart, Z would have held up his Ace until the third round, thereby exhausting B in Hearts and preventing him putting his partner in. But when B took the first Diamond trick with the Ace, Z thought naturally that A held the Queen of Diamonds, and played accordingly. Of course, B would have looked very foolish if Z had played the King of Diamonds on the second round and his Queen had dropped on it. But it was impossible for Z to do so.

48. *False Carding*

The hand was played at the Portland Club, and the story of this little drama is recounted by Brigadier-General C. A. Sykes in his admirable book, *The Bridge Mind*, and afterwards published in the *Daily Express*.



At score game all, Y Z being some 600 points to the bad, A bid "One No Trump." Y, a little desperate, said "Three Clubs." B, of course, was mute. Z saw that if he bid "Two No Trumps" he would be left in and would probably make game. But that would not wipe off their arrears, unless he could goad A into an indiscretion. He bid "Three No Trumps." A took it as an affront to his perfectly good No Trumper, and doubled. Z quietly re-doubled.

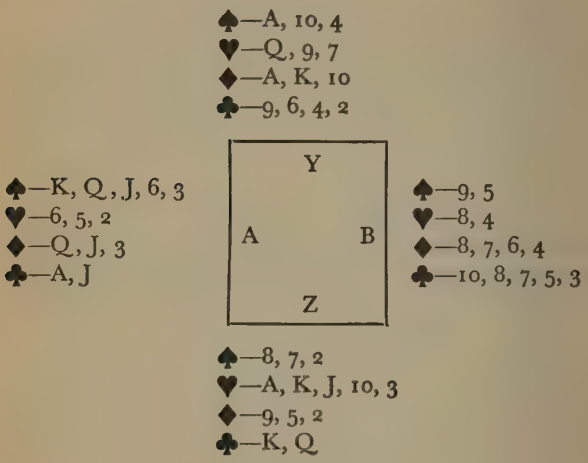
A's lead was Heart 6, on which Dummy played the 7, B the 8, and Z the Jack. This, for A, marked the 9 with B. Z led the Ace of Clubs and stopped, as if he had no more. The King and Queen of Spades followed, A passing both for fear of making Dummy's Jack a re-entry for Clubs.

Then came the 4 of Clubs, and A was faced with five discards to make, and an ominous feeling of depression. He watched Z's discards with an eagle eye. They were, in turn, a small Spade, the 5 and King of Hearts, and the 7 and Queen of Diamonds. Still trusting his partner for the 9, A discarded all his Hearts, keeping King and a small Diamond and the Ace of Spades.

At the eleventh trick Dummy's lead was a Diamond, which was won by Z with the Ace. Then, to A's horror, Z produced the 9 of Hearts. After agonised thought, A decided to keep the Ace of Spades, and the Diamond 8 was the last trick. Grand slam in No Trumps doubled and re-doubled against two Aces, a King, and a Queen!

49. *False Carding that Scored Game*

The following case was too much for a Declarer, although he ought not to have been deceived by a fairly obvious ruse.



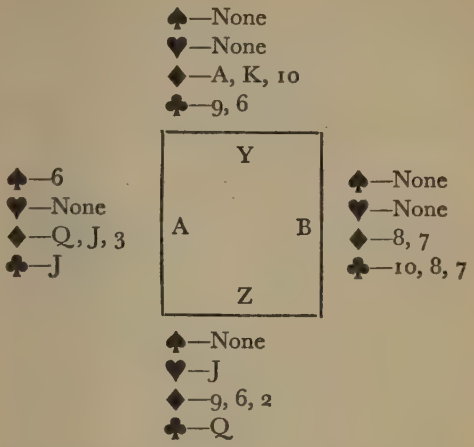
Score: game all. Z secures the contract at "Three Hearts" over "Two Spades." The King of Spades is led.

Z has his contract safe—one Spade, five Hearts, two Diamonds, and one Club. But how can he get the extra trick to give him game and rubber?

As the cards lay, it was there, but Z missed it.

In the first eight tricks A made two Spades and one Club, while Z got one Spade and four Hearts, including a ruff of Spades. Diamonds had not been led, but B had discarded

the 4 and the 6. At the ninth trick Z led the 2 of Diamonds. The cards left in were :



A played the Queen of Diamonds on Z's 2, and Dummy won with the King, the seven coming from B. Z regained the lead with the Queen of Clubs, and now comes the critical point. Z led a small Diamond, and the 3 was played by A. What should Dummy do ?

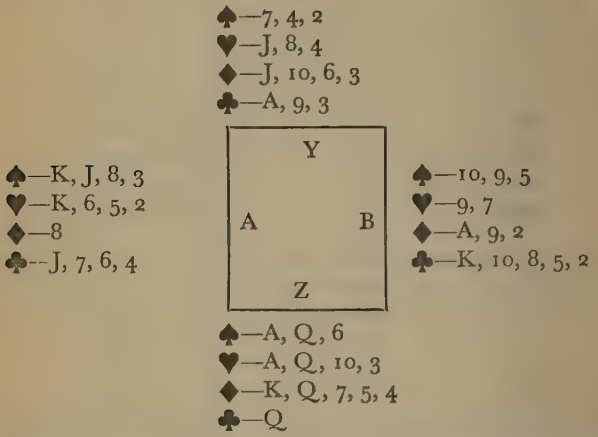
The Ace was put up from Dummy with the idea of dropping the Jack from B ; which was absurd. B might, indeed, have the Jack, but in that case the eight is with it, for A could not have played the Queen from Q, 8, 3.

The 10 was, therefore, the correct card. It could not lose a trick, and would win one if A had false carded from Q, J, 3, as he had, in fact, done. The opponents made their fourth trick and saved the rubber. Z should have " smelt a rat " and played his 10, because only by this play could he make game and rubber.

50. *Counting the Cards*

The following hand was played by the late J. B. Elwell, of New York, who was one of the most brilliant players.

It was played before the war at the Travellers' Club, Paris.



Score : game all. Z deals, and bids "One No Trump." All pass. A opens the 3 of Spades, Y plays the 2, B the 9, and Z takes the trick with the Queen.

Z leads 4 of Diamonds and B takes the trick with the Ace, Dummy playing the 10.

What card should B now lead ?

The obvious lead is the 10 of Spades.

But Mr. Elwell, who was B, saw that this would not save the game.

The way he worked it out was as follows :

A having led the 3 of Spades, and the 2 being in Dummy, it was obvious that his suit was four only. Then came trick two, and A's 8 of Diamonds was instructive.

There was a plain inference to be drawn here. A could not have K, Q, 8 or he would have played the Queen, and

he could not have King and one, or Queen and one, or he would certainly have taken the trick, therefore his 8 of Diamonds must be a singleton.

Mr. Elwell could now count A's hand. A had originally one Diamond and four each of the other suits, and therefore Z has only one Club, which might be the Queen, as it turned out to be.

Instead of returning his partner's Spade lead, Mr. Elwell led the King of Clubs, and he and his partner saved the game.

PART FIVE

THE LAWS

OF

AUCTION BRIDGE

AS REVISED AND ADOPTED BY THE PORTLAND CLUB
AFTER CONSULTATION WITH OTHER LONDON CLUBS

March 1st, 1928

(Published by arrangement with Messrs. Thomas De La Rue & Co., Ltd.

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INTRODUCTION

EARLY in the year 1927 the Portland Club took steps to revise the Laws of Auction Bridge, with the intention, *inter alia*, of incorporating therein " Decisions " on questions raised since the last issue in 1924.

The question of adopting Majority Calling in place of Value Calling having become an issue, the Portland Club decided to take the opinion of the leading London and provincial clubs on this and certain other matters. At the same time the Portland Club invited eleven of the leading card-playing clubs of London to confer with them in considering the replies from the London and provincial clubs, and in revising the Laws.

The conference consisted of representatives of the following clubs : Almack's, Baldwin, Bath, Carlton, Conservative, Devonshire, National Liberal, St. James's, St. Stephen's, Turf, White's, and Portland.

At the first meeting of the Conference it was decided to adopt the Majority Calling, but, in response to representations, it was decided at a second meeting to request all clubs to give Majority Calling a four months' trial, and at the end of that period a second vote of the London and provincial clubs was taken.

A third meeting of the Conference was then held, and, the results of the voting having been made known, it was resolved by a unanimous vote " to retain Value Calling in the Revised Laws of Auction Bridge," the Conference finding " that there is not a general desire to adopt Majority Calling in place of Value Calling."

It was decided, however, that for the convenience of players, who may desire to play Majority Calling, an alternative Law be included in the Book of Laws of Auction Bridge, as an appendix.

The Conference further desired that the Portland Club should issue as soon as possible the Revised Laws of Auction Bridge.

The Card Committee of the Portland Club desire to acknowledge the valuable help which they have received in the drafting of the Laws as revised by them and now issued.

THE LAWS OF AUCTION BRIDGE

I. PRELIMINARY

Formation of Tables and Joining Tables

1. (1) A table for Auction Bridge consists of four, five or six members. A table with six members is complete.

(2) Any candidate may at any time join a table which is not complete by announcing or signifying his desire to do so.

(3) A member of a table may join another table, but he cannot be a member of more than one table at the same time.

Precedence

2. In the formation of a table, candidates who have not yet played have precedence over those who have played in regard to membership and also in regard to title to play in the first rubber. As between candidates who have not played or as between candidates who have played, precedence is determined by drawing cards.

Player Breaking up a Table

3. If a player retires from a table thereby leaving it with less than four members, he is not entitled to compete against any of the remaining players for entry into any other table.

Selection of Players and Partners for First Rubber

4. If all the four players for the first rubber at a table have to be selected by drawing cards, that drawing serves

for all purposes in the following manner : The four who have drawn lower cards than the others play in the first rubber, the two with lower cards playing as partners against the other two, the one with the lowest card being the dealer of the first hand.

In any other case the four who are to play in the first rubber draw in like manner for partners and deal.

Selection of Players and Partners for Succeeding Rubber

5. At the end of each rubber " table up " must be announced. Place must then be made at the table for any member who is waiting to play, and, if the table is not complete, for any candidate who, before a card has been drawn for selection of players or partners, announces his desire to join the table.

In the selection of the two or more members who are to continue playing, precedence is given to any who have played a less number of consecutive rubbers, and, as amongst those with equal claims, is determined by drawing cards.

The four members entitled to play then draw for partners and deal.

Choice of Packs and Seats

6. The dealer of the first hand of a rubber has the right to choose his seat and the pack with which he will deal. He may consult his partner, but having announced his decision must abide by it.

Drawing Cards

7. (1) When cards have to be drawn to determine precedence or partners, a shuffled pack is spread face downwards on the table. Each draws a card from the pack. When all have so drawn the cards are exposed. If anyone exposes more than one card or exposes his card before all have drawn, there must be a fresh draw.

(2) Precedence is conceded in each case to the drawer of the lower card.

(3) In drawing, but for no other purpose, the Ace ranks as the lowest card of its suit, and cards of equal value rank as between themselves, Spades (highest), Hearts, Diamonds, Clubs (lowest).

II. THE RUBBER

The Shuffle, Cut, and Deal

Shuffling

8. (1) Before every deal each player has the right to shuffle once. The Dealer has the right to shuffle last. Should the face of a card be seen while the dealer is shuffling or presenting the pack to be cut, he can be called upon to re-shuffle.

(2) The pack must not be shuffled—

(*a*) so that the face of any card can be seen ;

(*b*) below the table ; or

(*c*) during the play of a hand.

(3) During each deal the dealer's partner should collect the other cards, shuffle them and place them, as a pack, face downwards on his right, i.e. on the left of the player who will deal next.

Cutting

9. (1) The dealer presents the pack to the player on his right who lifts off a portion from the top and places it towards the dealer beside the bottom portion. The dealer then completes the cut by placing the bottom portion on the top portion.

(2) There must be a new shuffle and cut—

(*a*) if the cut has left fewer than four cards in either portion ;

(*b*) if a card is exposed in cutting or in completing the cut ;

(*c*) if the player who cuts completes the cut ;

(*d*) if there is doubt as to the exact place in which the pack was divided, or as to which was the top portion ; or

(*e*) if the dealer shuffles the cards after the pack has been cut.

Dealing

10 (1) Each player deals in turn. The order of dealing goes to the left.

(2) The dealer must deal the fifty-two cards into four packets, face downwards, one at a time in regular rotation to the left, the first card being dealt to the player on his left.

(3) Any player dealing out of turn, or with the opponent's pack, may be stopped before the last card is dealt ; otherwise the deal stands good as if made in turn, and the packs, if changed, remain changed.

(4) No player may look at any of his cards until the deal is completed.

A New Deal

11. (1) There must be a new deal by the same player with the same pack—

(*a*) if the dealer omits to have the pack cut and any player draws attention to the error before the last card is dealt and before he looks at any of his cards ;

(*b*) if during a deal any card is found to be faced in the pack ;

(*c*) if during a deal a card is in any way exposed on, above or under the table. This is subject to the law relating to looking at cards during a deal (Law 32) ;

(*d*) if the cards are not dealt into four packets, one at a time in regular rotation, beginning with the player on the dealer's left ; provided that, if the dealer deals two cards at once or consecutively to the same hand, he may rectify the error before dealing another card ;

(*e*) if the last card does not come in its regular order to the dealer ;

(*f*) if a player picks up another player's hand and looks at it, and the error is discovered before a call is made ;

(*g*) if before play begins, or at any time during the hand, a player holds more than the proper number of cards and another less ;

and in any other case where a new deal is required or claimed under these laws (see Law 34, call out-of-turn ; Law 36, illegal call ; Law 37, card exposed during auction ; Law 42, omission to play to trick, and Law 43, missing card).

(2) If during a deal, or during the play of a hand, the pack is proved to be incorrect as regards the number or the value of the cards which it contains, the hand is void, and there must be a new deal by the same player with a correct pack, but past scores stand good.

The Auction

The Auction and its Duration

12. (1) When the deal is completed, the dealer must open the auction by making a call ; and, thereafter, each player in succession to the left must make a call, the auction continuing until a call made by one player has been passed by the other three players, at which point the auction is closed.

(2) A call may be either a pass, a bid, a double or a redouble.

Passing

13. (1) A player who does not desire to make any other call passes, and, to avoid misunderstandings, this is best expressed by the words " No Bid."

(2) If in the first round of the auction all four players pass, the hand is abandoned, and the player whose turn it is to deal next must deal, using the other pack.

Bidding and Overbidding

14. (1) A player who makes a bid offers to contract that if the hand be played with the suit named in his bid as Trumps or, should his bid so specify, with No Trumps, he and his partner will win at least as many odd tricks as the bid specifies. " Odd Tricks " are tricks in excess of six.

(2) Each successive bid must be either of higher value than the last preceding bid or of equal value and of a greater number of tricks.

(3) The value of a bid is determined by giving to each odd trick named in the bid the value (unaffected by doubling or re-doubling) attaching to it under the law relating to the scoring of tricks (i.e. Clubs 6, Diamonds 7, Hearts 8, Spades 9, and No Trumps 10—see Law 24).

Doubling and Re-doubling

15. (1) Any player may in his turn double the last preceding bid, if made by an opponent, or re-double it if it has been doubled by an opponent. Doubling and re-doubling affect scoring values in the manner set out in these laws (Laws 24–26) but do not affect the number of tricks in the bid, nor its value, for the purpose of the auction.

(2) A bid which has been re-doubled may not again be doubled.

(3) When a bid has been doubled or re-doubled, any player, including the player whose bid has been doubled or who doubled the bid which has since been re-doubled, may in his turn make a further bid.

(4) If in doubling or re-doubling a player mentions an incorrect number of tricks, he is deemed to have doubled or re-doubled the bid as made.

Correcting a Misnomer

16. If a bid is shown to be a misnomer by the bidder amending it practically in the same breath, it stands as amended. By a misnomer is meant a slip of the tongue and not a change of mind. Except in a case provided for by this law or by Law 35 (2) (insufficient bid) a player may not alter a call made by him.

The Final Bid and the Declarer

17. The player who has made the final bid in the auction and his partner become the declaring side ; that one of them who first bid the suit named in the final bid, or who first

bid No Trumps in a case where the final bid specifies No Trumps, becomes "the Declarer," and the final bid becomes "the Declaration."

Information as to Calls Made

18. At any time before the auction is closed a player is entitled to have all previous calls repeated. After it is closed, he is only entitled to ask what is the declaration and whether (but not by whom) it was doubled or re-doubled.

The Play

Leading, Playing, Tricks

19. (1) When the auction is closed, the player on the left of the Declarer leads a card, and as soon as a card has so been led the Declarer's partner spreads his cards face upwards in front of him on the table, and the Declarer becomes the player of his partner's hand as well as of his own.

(2) After a lead a card is played from each hand in succession to the left, and the four cards thus played constitute a trick.

(3) If a suit was named in the final bid of the auction, each card of that suit ranks as a trump.

(4) A trick containing a trump or trumps is won by the player of the highest trump. A trick containing no trump is won by the player of the highest card of the suit led.

(5) The winner of each trick leads to the next trick. If he is the Declarer, he must lead from the hand from which the winning card in the preceding trick was played.

(6) The leader may lead any card in his hand. The players of the other three hands must follow suit, if they can ; but a player having no card of the suit led may play any card in his hand.

(7) A card drawn by the Declarer from either hand is not played until it is actually quitted.

(8) A card once played, or named by a player as the card which he proposes to play, cannot be taken back except

as directed or permitted in these laws (see Laws 38 and 39, lead out of turn ; Law 43, missing card ; and Law 52, correcting a revoke).

(9) Each completed trick must be gathered and turned face downwards on the table by the side winning it and is deemed to be quitted when the player's hand is removed from it. All tricks gathered by a side should be kept together and so arranged that the number thereof may be observed, and the identity of each trick readily established.

(10) After a trick has been turned and quitted the cards in it may be counted face downwards, but it may not be inspected before the end of the hand unless there is doubt as to which side won it, or unless it is found to contain an incorrect number of cards.

(11) Any player during the play of a trick, or after the four cards are played, and before, but not after, they are touched for the purpose of gathering them, may require the players to specify which cards they have played.

Dummy's Rights

20. The Declarer's partner before placing his cards on the table has all the rights of a player and may call attention to the fact that the wrong opponent has led to the first trick, but after exposing his hand he becomes " Dummy " and may take no part whatever in the game except that he may—

(*a*) ask the Declarer whether any play by him constitutes a revoke ;
(*b*) call attention to the fact that too many or too few cards have been played to a trick, or that the Declarer has played two cards to a trick from one hand and none from the other ;
(*c*) see a trick before it is turned and quitted ;
(*d*) call attention to the fact that a trick has been wrongly gathered by either side ;
(*e*) correct the claim of either opponent to a penalty to which he is not entitled ;

(*f*) correct an erroneous score, or mis-statement of fact ;
(*g*) participate in the discussion of any question of fact or law ;
(*h*) consult with his partner as to the choice of penalty for an established revoke.

Curtailing Play

21. (1) An opponent of the Declarer may at any time show any of his remaining cards to the Declarer for the purpose of claiming one or more of the remaining tricks, and such cards are not liable to be called unless they are so exposed that his partner might see them.

(2) If the Declarer indicates that some or all of the remaining tricks are his, he may be required to comply with the provisions of Law 51.

(3) If a claim, or a concession, of tricks has been accepted and all the players have in consequence exposed their cards, no player can claim that the play of the hand shall be continued. If it is found that either side has conceded a trick or tricks which the opponents could not win by any play of the cards, the latter cannot claim such trick or tricks ; but, subject to this, the score must stand as claimed and admitted.

(4) In any case where a hand is not played out, the unplayed cards may be examined for the purpose of establishing a revoke.

The Score

Points to be Scored

22. (1) Points are scored in respect of Tricks, Bonus, Undertricks, Honours, Slam, Penalties, and Rubber.

(2) Separate account is kept of points scored in respect of tricks. For this purpose a line is drawn across the scoring sheet ; trick points are scored below the line and all other points above the line.

Points which Win Game

23. (1) A game is won by the partners who, in one or more hands, first score thirty points for tricks won.

(2) The hand in which a side wins a game is played out and all points won therein are scored ; but no trick points in excess of thirty scored by the winning side and no trick points already scored by the other side assist towards winning the next game.

For the purposes of this law, tricks taken for the revoke penalty rank as tricks won.

Trick Points

24. If the Declarer by winning the declared number of odd tricks, or more, makes good the declaration, he scores in respect of each odd trick won by him :

6	points	when	Clubs	are	Trumps.
7	,,	,,	Diamonds	,,	,,
8	,,	,,	Hearts	,,	,,
9	,,	,,	Spades	,,	,,
10	,,	,,	there are No Trumps.		

In scoring, these values are doubled when the bid has been doubled, and are quadrupled when the bid has been re-doubled.

For the purposes of this law, tricks taken for the revoke penalty rank as tricks won.

Bonus Points

25. If the Declarer by winning the declared number of odd tricks, or more, makes good the declaration in a case where the final bid has been doubled, he scores a bonus of fifty points for winning the number of tricks declared, and fifty points for each additional trick. If the final bid has

been re-doubled, this bonus is increased to one hundred points.

For the purposes of this law, tricks taken for the revoke penalty do not rank as tricks won.

Undertrick Points

26. If the Declarer fails to make good the declaration, he scores nothing for tricks, and his opponents, unless a revoke has been established against them, score in respect of each Undertrick fifty points, or, if the final bid was doubled or re-doubled, one hundred or two hundred points, respectively.

An undertrick is a trick which the declaring side has contracted to win, but has not won.

Honour Points

27. (1) The honours in a trump suit are the Ace, King, Queen, Knave and Ten of the Trump Suit. When there are no trumps, they are the four Aces.

(2) A player and his partner score for honours held by them as follows :

(*a*) In a trump suit—		
for five honours in one hand	ten times the trick value of the suit.	
for four honours in one hand and one in the other	nine times	ditto.
for four honours in one hand and none in the other	eight times	ditto.
for five honours, neither hand containing more than three	five times	ditto.
for four honours, not all in one hand	four times	ditto.
for three honours ..	twice	ditto.

(*b*) If there are no trumps—

for four Aces in one hand . .	100 points.
for four Aces, not all in one hand .	40 „
for three Aces	30 „

(3) Points for honours are not affected by doubling or re-doubling.

Slam Points

28. If either side wins—

(*a*) All thirteen tricks, that side scores for Grand Slam 100 points ;

(*b*) Twelve tricks, that side scores for Little Slam 50 points.

The declaring side, having contracted to make seven odd tricks, and failed, cannot score a Little Slam.

For the purposes of this law, tricks taken for the revoke penalty do not rank as tricks won.

Rubber Points

29. The rubber is won by the side which first wins two games, and the winners of the rubber add 250 points to their score.

Completion of Score

30. At the end of the rubber the total score of each side above and below the line is added up, and the difference between the two totals is the number of points won and lost.

Correction of Score

31. (1) A mistake in the trick score may be corrected at any time before the completion of the first deal of the next game after that in which the error was made, or, if the error was made in the last game of a rubber, before the score of the rubber has been made up and agreed.

(2) A trick gathered by the side which did not win it may be claimed by the rightful owners at any time before the tricks have been put together for shuffling. If the claim is

made before all have played to the succeeding trick, Laws 38 and 39 (leads out of turn) do not apply : the cards led and played to that trick are taken back and cannot be treated as exposed cards, and a lead is made from the correct hand. If the claim is not made until all have played to the succeeding trick, that trick and subsequent tricks shall stand as played.

(3) Any other error in the score may be corrected at any time before the score of the rubber has been made up and agreed.

III. INFRINGEMENT OF LAWS AND PENALTIES

Looking at Cards During Deal

32. If a player looks at any of his cards during the deal and a card is exposed before the deal is completed, the player on his left may, after looking at the cards already dealt to him, elect that notwithstanding the exposure of such card (Law 11 (1) *c*), there shall not be a new deal.

Passing Out of Turn

33. (1) If a player passes out of turn and attention is drawn to the irregularity before the player on the offender's left has called, the player whose turn it was to call must do so, and the offender when next it is his turn to call must pass, but is not debarred from subsequent participation in the auction.

(2) If attention is not drawn to the irregularity before the player on the offender's left has called, the out-of-turn pass and the subsequent call both rank as calls made in correct turn and the auction proceeds accordingly.

Bidding, Doubling, or Re-doubling Out of Turn

34. (1) If a player makes out of turn a call other than a pass, and attention is drawn to the irregularity before the player on the offender's left has called, that player may demand a new deal.

(2) If attention is not drawn to the irregularity before the player on the offender's left has called, or if that player elects not to demand a new deal, the out-of-turn call and the subsequent call both rank as calls made in correct turn and the auction proceeds accordingly.

Insufficient Bid

35. (1) If a player bids a number of tricks insufficient to overbid the preceding bid and fails to correct his bid before attention is drawn to the irregularity, the player on his left may either—

(*a*) Allow the bid to stand. In this case the insufficient bid ranks as a sufficient bid ; or

(*b*) Elect to treat the number of tricks specified in the bid as raised either to the number requisite to overbid the preceding bid, or to seven, whichever is the lower. In this case the offender's partner may make no call other than a pass unless an opponent overbids or doubles ; or

(*c*) Declare the auction closed. In this case the last bid preceding the insufficient bid becomes the Declaration, any double or re-double of it remaining effective.

(2) Until attention has been drawn to the irregularity or a call has been made by the player on his left, the offender may correct his bid by raising the number of tricks specified to the requisite number. If he does so, the bid stands as corrected and there is no penalty.

(3) If the player on the offender's left makes a call before attention has been drawn to the irregularity, he is deemed to have elected to allow the bid to stand.

Illegal Calls

36. If a player—

(*a*) bids an impossible number of tricks ;

(*b*) bids when debarred by these laws from bidding ;

(*c*) doubles his partner's bid ;

(*d*) doubles or re-doubles a bid which his partner has doubled or re-doubled ;

(*e*) names a wrong suit when doubling or re-doubling ;

(*f*) alters his call when not entitled by these laws to do so (see Laws 16 and 35) ;

(*g*) being an opponent of the Declarer, makes a call other than a pass after the auction is closed ; or

(*h*) makes any other call not authorised by these laws ; the player on the offender's left may either demand a new deal, or treat such call as not made, or allow it to stand ; provided that if he elects that a bid of an impossible number of tricks shall stand, such bid shall be treated as a bid of seven odd tricks only.

Card Exposed During Auction

37. If, after the deal has been completed but before the auction is closed, any player exposes a card from his hand, the player on his left, after looking at his cards, may demand a new deal. If the deal is allowed to stand, the card may be taken up and cannot be treated as an exposed card ; and the auction proceeds as if nothing irregular had occurred.

Lead Out of Turn by Declarer

38. If the Declarer leads when it is not his turn to lead or leads a card from the wrong hand, he may not voluntarily withdraw the card led ; but, if either opponent draws attention to the irregularity before a fourth card has been played to the trick, a lead must be made from the correct hand, and the cards played to the trick are taken back and cannot be treated as exposed cards.

Lead Out of Turn by Opponent

39. (1) If an opponent of the Declarer leads when it is his partner's turn to lead, the Declarer, before he has played to the trick from either hand, may require the partner to lead, and may either—

(*a*) call a suit to be led by him ; or

(*b*) treat the card led out of turn as an exposed card.

(2) If an opponent of the Declarer leads when it is the Declarer's turn to lead, the Declarer, before he has played to the trick from either hand, may lead from the correct hand, and the card led out of turn is an exposed card ; but when next it is an opponent's turn to lead, the Declarer, if he has not in the interval called the exposed card, may call a suit to be led by that opponent ; and, should he do so, the

card (unless previously played by the owner) may be taken up and ceases to be an exposed card.

(3) If an opponent of the Declarer leads out of turn simultaneously with a lead by the player whose turn it is to lead, the card led out of turn is an exposed card, and there is no other penalty.

Premature Lead or Play by Opponent

40. If an opponent of the Declarer plays to a trick before his partner when in proper turn his partner should play before him, or, if, before his partner has played to the current trick, he leads to the succeeding trick or displays to his partner any card or cards in his hand, the Declarer may require the offender's partner—

(*a*) to win the trick, by trumping if necessary ;

(*b*) not to win the trick ; or

(*c*) to discard a card of a named suit ;

but no such requirement can override the player's duty to follow suit.

Premature Play by Declarer

41. If the Declarer, after leading a card from either hand, plays a card from the other hand out of turn, he can claim no penalty from an opponent for playing out of turn.

Omission to Play to a Trick

42. (1) If an opponent of the Declarer omits to play to a trick and attention is not drawn to the irregularity before the offender has played to the next trick, the Declarer may on discovering the irregularity claim a new deal.

(2) If the Declarer omits to play to a trick from his own hand and attention is not drawn to the irregularity before he has played to the next trick, either opponent may, on discovering the irregularity, but without consulting his partner, claim a new deal.

(3) If in either of the above cases a new deal is not claimed, or if the Declarer has omitted to play from Dummy's hand, the offending player shall at once add to

the defective trick a card which he could properly play to it, but the ownership of the trick shall not be affected thereby.

Playing with Incomplete Hand

43. (1) If after the completion of a deal a player finds that he has less than the proper number of cards, and no other player has more than the proper number, the missing card or cards must, if possible, be found, and—

(*a*) In the event of failure to find a missing card, or of its position when found being such as to show that it was not duly dealt to the player, there shall be a new deal ;

(*b*) In any other event (including the case where a missing card is found in a quitted trick), the card shall be restored to the player and for the purposes of these laws is deemed to have been in his hand continuously and cannot be treated as an exposed card.

(2) If a quitted trick contains more than four cards and there is any doubt as to which card was included therein in error, the decision rests with the opponents of the player whose hand is deficient.

Card Exposed during Play

44. (1) If after the auction is closed an opponent of the Declarer exposes a card from his hand otherwise than in the proper course of play, such card must be left on the table as " an exposed card," and the Declarer, whenever it is the turn of the owner of the card to lead or to play, may call that card, i.e. require him to lead or play that card, even though it may not have been left on the table.

(2) The Declarer cannot forbid the lead or play of an exposed card.

(3) A call to play an exposed card does not override the player's duty to follow suit, but the card remains an exposed card until played and may be called to any later trick.

(4) For the purpose of this law and subject to any provision to the contrary in these laws (see Law 21, curtailing play ; Law 31 (2), trick wrongly gathered ; Laws 38 and

39, leading out of turn ; Law 43, playing with incomplete hand ; Law 51, play after tricks claimed ; and Law 52, correcting revoke) the following are exposed cards :

(*a*) A surplus card led or played to the current trick. In this case the player is entitled to say which card he intended to lead or to play ;

(*b*) A card dropped with its face upwards, or in any way exposed on or above the table, even though no one can name it. But a card dropped below the table is not an exposed card ;

(*c*) A card named or indicated by an opponent of the Declarer as being in his hand ;

(*d*) A card detached from the hand of a player and so held that the Declarer can name it correctly. This is subject to the law relating to curtailing play (see Law 21 (1)) ;

(*e*) A card which under any other provision in these laws ranks as an exposed card (see Laws 38 and 39, leading out of turn ; Law 52, correcting revoke ; and Law 54, playing before opponent has given his decision).

(5) No penalty is incurred by the Declarer or his partner for exposing cards after the auction has closed.

Dummy suggesting Card to be Played

45. If Dummy, by touching a card or otherwise, suggests the play of a card, either opponent may, without consulting his partner, call upon the Declarer to play or not to play the card suggested, unless such play would constitute a revoke.

Dummy drawing Attention to a Wrong Lead

46. If Dummy draws the attention of the Declarer to the fact that he has led, or is about to lead, from the wrong hand, the opponent on the left of the Declarer may name the hand from which the lead is to be made.

Dummy drawing Attention to Irregularity

47. If Dummy draws attention to any irregularity to which he is not authorised by these laws to draw attention (see Law 20), the Declarer can exact no penalty in respect of that irregularity.

Dummy looking at Cards in Other Hands

48. (1) If Dummy looks over any other hand, he loses the right to ask the Declarer if his play constitutes a revoke.

(2) If Dummy asks such question after looking over any other hand and the Declarer could follow suit or play as required, the revoke is thereupon established.

Drawing Partner's Attention to Position of Trick

49. If an opponent of the Declarer, before his partner has played to a trick and without being requested to do so, draws his partner's attention to the trick by saying it is his, by naming his card or drawing it towards him, or in any other way, the Declarer may require the offender's partner—

(*a*) to play the highest or the lowest card which he holds in the suit lead ;

(*b*) to win the trick, by trumping if necessary ; or

(*c*) not to win the trick ;

but no such requirement can override the player's duty to follow suit.

Looking at Quitted Trick

50. If a player (including Dummy) during the play of a hand looks at a trick which has been properly turned and quitted, when not authorised by these laws to do so (Law 19 (10)), his opponents may score fifty points for each offence.

Declarer claiming Uncertain Tricks

51. If during the play of a hand the Declarer indicates that some or all of the remaining tricks are his, he must place his cards, face upwards, on the table and state how

he proposes to play the rest of the hand, including any finesse, and he may be required by either opponent to play in the manner stated. He cannot call any cards which may have been exposed in consequence of his action, nor can his cards be called by an opponent, nor can he revoke during the play of the exposed hand.

The Revoke Corrected

52. (1) If a player—

(*a*) plays a card of a different suit when he could play a card of the suit led, or

(*b*) leads or plays otherwise than as required when he could lead or play as he has been duly required to do,

he revokes, and, in determining whether a player has revoked, a card temporarily missing from his hand and subsequently restored to it under these laws is deemed to have been in his hand while it was missing.

(2) A revoke becomes established when either—

(*a*) the trick has been properly turned and quitted, or

(*b*) the offender or his partner in right turn or otherwise has led or played to the next trick, or

(*c*) the offender has exposed his remaining cards.

(3) If the offender discovers his error before the revoke is established, he must lead or play a correct card, and

(i) if he is an opponent of the Declarer, the latter may either treat the card wrongly played as an exposed card or claim that the card to be led or played shall be the highest or the lowest card which the offender holds in the correct suit ;

(ii) if he is the Declarer, and the wrong card has been played from his own hand, the player on his left, if he has played to the trick after the Declarer, may claim that the card to be played shall be the highest or the lowest card which the Declarer holds in the correct suit.

(4) If the wrong card has been played from Dummy's hand, there is no penalty, whether the revoke is corrected or becomes established.

(5) A player (including Dummy) may ask his partner whether any lead or play by him constitutes a revoke, and, if such inquiry has been begun before the trick has been properly turned and quitted, subsequent turning and quitting does not establish the revoke, and the error may be corrected unless the inquiry made has been answered in the negative, or unless the offender or his partner has led or played to the next trick or exposed his remaining cards. This is subject to the provisions of Law 48.

(6) Any card played to the trick after the revoke may, when the revoke has been corrected, be taken back without penalty and cannot be treated as an exposed card.

The Revoke Established

53. (1) If a player fails to correct a revoke whilst it is open to him to do so, the trick stands as played, and—

(*a*) the offender and his partner cannot score any points won in the hand other than points for honours and infringements of these laws, and

(*b*) one hundred points are added to their opponents' score ;

Provided that in the case of the first revoke in a suit the Declarer, if he has not in that hand himself been penalised under this law, may, after consultation with his partner, elect to take two of his opponents' tricks and add them to his own in lieu of the one hundred points.

Tricks so taken rank for the purposes of scoring in the manner directed in the laws relating to scoring.

(2) Either opponent of the Declarer may claim the penalty for a revoke.

(3) If the Declarer has inquired as to the correctness of any lead or play or suggested that he has observed a revoke, Dummy may join in any discussion in regard to the facts.

(4) If a revoke has been claimed, with or without reference to a particular suit, the tricks may be inspected at the end of the hand for the purpose of establishing it, and if the accused player or his partner after such claim has been made mixes the cards before they have been fully inspected, the revoke is established.

(5) A revoke cannot be claimed after the cards have been properly cut for the following deal.

Playing before Decision on Call Penalty Given

54. If a player leads or plays without ascertaining the decision of an opponent who is entitled to require him to lead or play in a particular way, the opponent's right is not affected thereby, and the card led or played can be treated as an exposed card.

Claiming Lead of Suit not Held

55. If a player entitled to call the suit from which an offender or his partner is to lead or discard calls a suit, but the hand from which the lead or discard is called contains no card of that suit, the penalty lapses.

Mis-statement of Law or Fact

56. If a player, when requested by his partner or an opponent to state the law applying to a case in point, or to state the facts in relation to any matter about which information may properly be given, mis-states the law or the facts, and such mis-statement remains uncorrected, no penalty can be imposed for any irregularity attributable to such mis-statement.

Claiming Unauthorised Penalty

57. If a player entitled to claim a penalty for an irregularity claims one to which he is not entitled, the right to exact any penalty for that irregularity lapses.

Wrong Player Claiming Penalty

58. If the partner of the player solely entitled to claim a penalty for an irregularity suggests which of alternative

penalties is to be claimed, the right to exact any penalty for that irregularity lapses.

Right to Draw Attention to Irregularity

59. Subject to the provisions of the law relating to Dummy's rights (Law 20), any player may call his partner's attention to the fact that an irregularity has been committed and may state the law on the subject.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

Agreed Time Limits

60. If a rubber has been started under an agreement that play shall end at a specified time, or if the players agree during a rubber that any particular hand shall be the last, the score is made up at the end of the hand in progress at the time agreed upon, or at the end of the particular hand agreed upon, one hundred and twenty-five points being added to the score of a side by which a game has been won.

Player Obliged to Retire

61. Any player who is obliged to leave a table before the rubber is concluded may, with the consent of the other three players, appoint a substitute. If such consent is not given, or if it is impossible to obtain a substitute, the score shall be made up in accordance with the provisions of the last preceding law.

Damaged Card

62. If any card has been torn or so marked that it can be identified from its back, it must be replaced by a fresh card, or a new pack must be obtained.

Calling for New Cards

63. Any player, after a hand has been played and before the pack is cut for the next deal, may call for fresh cards at his own expense. He must call for two new packs of which the player about to deal takes his choice.

Dealing, etc., for Partner

64. A player may not shuffle, cut or deal for his partner without the permission of the opponents.

Requesting Bystander to Decide

65. Any question may, by agreement amongst the players, be referred for decision to a bystander.

Bets on Rubber

66. (1) Bets on the result of a rubber are decided by reference to points won and not by reference to games won.

(2) If the difference in points between the two sides is too small to involve any money passing between the players, or if a rubber is closed before two games have been won by either side (Laws 60 and 61), bets on the result are void.

Etiquette

The following rules belong to the established Etiquette of Auction Bridge. They are not included in the Laws, as it is difficult—in some cases impossible—to apply any penalty for their infraction, and the only remedy is to cease playing with those who habitually disregard them.

It is to be borne in mind that, from the nature of the conditions under which the game is played, acts may be so done, and words so spoken, as to convey a very distinct intimation to a partner. To do so is to offend against the most important of the proprieties of the game.

Bids should be made in a simple and uniform manner, e.g. by saying, " One Heart," " One No Trump," etc. The use of the expression, " Pass " is inadvisable ; the correct term to use is, " No bid."

It is unfair purposely to make a bid which is insufficient to over-bid the previous one.

Anyone, having the lead and one or more winning cards to play, should not draw a second card out of his hand until

his partner has played to the first trick, such act being a distinct intimation that the former has played a winning card, or desires to have the lead left to him.

A player who has looked at his cards, ought not to give any indication by word or gesture as to the nature of his hand, or call the attention of his partner to the score of the game.

A player who requires the cards to be specified under Law 19 (11), should do so for his own information only, and not in order to invite the attention of his partner.

No player should object to refer any disputed question of fact to a bystander who has no interest in the game.

It is unfair to revoke purposely, or to make a second revoke in order to conceal the first.

Tricks should not be stacked, or formed into a " book," but should be so arranged that they can be easily counted.

Appendix

For the assistance of any clubs or players who may desire to play under these laws with " Majority Calling " substituted for " Value Calling," it may be noted that the only alteration necessary to effect this modification is :

In Law 14 (2) for " Value " read " Number of Tricks," and for " Number of Tricks " read " Value."

The Committee of the Portland Club has always refused to adjudicate on questions of play or of etiquette, but on questions as to the interpretation of the Laws of Auction Bridge it is prepared to give a decision.

Three-handed Auction Bridge

The Laws are the same as those of Auction Bridge, except as varied by the following :

(I) The game is played by three players, all against all. A table with four members is complete.

(II) The player who cuts the lowest card deals the first hand ; the player who cuts the next lowest

card sits on the dealer's left, and the remaining player on the dealer's right. The second packet is Dummy's hand, and is exposed after the first card has been led.

(III) The rubber is won by the player who first wins two games. Each player scores 100 points for every game he wins, and the winner of the rubber adds a further 250 points to his score.

(IV) At the end of the rubber the total score of each player above and below the line is added up, and each player wins from, and loses to, each other player the difference between his score and that of the said other player.

(V) If a player makes, out of turn, a call other than a pass, and attention is drawn to the irregularity before the player on the offender's left has called, the offender forfeits 100 points to each of his adversaries, his call out of turn is annulled, and the auction proceeds as if it had not taken place.

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INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE LAWS

as agreed and promulgated by the

Portland Club . .	9, St. James's Square, London
Whist Club . .	9, East 62nd Street, New York
Commission Française du Bridge . .	6, Place de la Concorde, Paris

THE LAWS OF AUCTION BRIDGE

1933

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NEW LAWS

Please note that the section of this book *pages* 181–189 must be read in the light of the new International code of Laws and that the scoring on *pages* 187–188 has been altered.

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PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

In the Laws of Contract Bridge issued by the Portland Club in 1929 the hope was expressed that the differences between the American and British codes for that game might in due course be harmonised. In that year the project of an international code of laws for Auction and Contract Bridge was mooted and discussed both in the Portland Club and in the Whist Club of New York, and at the request of the Whist Club a synopsis of the many differences between the respective codes was prepared in December of that year.

It has taken over two years of diligent discussion and some prolonged conferences to remove these differences. Early in 1931 the Commission Française du Bridge became a party in these discussions. A code of Bridge Laws agreed by these three parties may fairly be entitled "International," as they are, respectively, responsible for the only Bridge Laws hitherto issued (with possibly one exception). The Portland Club hope that any body representing the players of any other country will appreciate that wider consultation would have made the work a task of many years.

The agreed code covers all the existing Bridge games—Auction, Plafond, and Contract—and will be applicable with little variation—probably confined to the scoring section—to any game of the Whist family which may hereafter be played.

Few players know how widely the English, French, and American laws have differed. Confining attention to differences which could reverse the result of a rubber, a comparison of the English and American laws produces at least 36 and a comparison of the American and French at least 50; and the minor differences are much more numerous. The English and French laws have differed more in form than in substance.

Improvement as well as assimilation has been an aim; and it is surprising, on reviewing the changes which have to be announced to our players, to see how largely new features predominate over pure adoptions from other codes.

The Portland Club wish to acknowledge the spirit in which those London Clubs whose representatives have helped on previous occasions, have refrained from pressing their claims to co-operate in this revision. Participation on this occasion would have proved an embarrassment in prolonging still further the already too protracted negotiations. They also tender their thanks to the members of the Whist Club of New York and of the Commission Française du Bridge, to whose valuable and unremitting labours much of the improvement in the laws is due.

THE SCOPE OF THE LAWS

The laws are designed to define correct procedure and to provide an adequate remedy in all cases where a player accidentally, carelessly, or inadvertently disturbs the proper course of the game or gains an unintentional, but nevertheless unfair, advantage.

The laws are not designed to prevent dishonourable practices: consequently there are no penalties to cover intentional violations either of the laws of the game or of the principles set out in the supplement. It suffices to warn players against any of the careless words or acts which transgress those strict principles of propriety which all players should observe, for, when no penalty is prescribed, the moral obligation of compliance is strongest. Ostracism is the ultimate remedy where intentional offences are repeated.

The penalties are moderated to a minimum consistent with justice, and an offending player should be ready to pay a prescribed penalty graciously and cheerfully.

When these principles are appreciated, arguments are avoided and the pleasure which the game offers is materially enhanced.

THE LAWS

Words between brackets in the text of the laws are inserted to help the reader. They do not form part of, or affect the meaning of, any provision.

PART I

DEFINITIONS

i. TABLE.—The group of persons entitled to play the game at a table provided for the purpose, unless the context otherwise requires.

ii. MEMBER.—A person who has acquired title to play at a table either immediately or in his turn.

iii. PLAYER.—One of the four members who for the time being are entitled to play. Two play as partners against the other two, each pair constituting a side.

iv. ROTATION.—The order or succession of the game, which is from player to player to the left in the direction taken by the hands of a watch.

v. TO DEAL.—To distribute the cards in rotation to the players. A deal extends from the cut to the moment when the last card has been duly placed on the table.

vi. THE AUCTION.—The period during which it is open to the players to bid in rotation for the contract.

vii. THE PLAY.—The period which begins when the auction closes and ends when the number of tricks won by each side has been determined, unless the context otherwise requires.

viii. THE HAND.—The period extending from the cut for a deal to the close of the play, unless the context otherwise requires.

ix. CALL.—A comprehensive term applicable to a bid, a double, a redouble or a pass.

x. DENOMINATION.—The suit or no-trump named in a bid.

xi. BID.—A call by which a player offers to contract that his side will win at least as many odd tricks (one to seven) as his bid specifies, provided the hand is played in the denomination he names.

xii. DOUBLE.—A call which has the effect of doubling or otherwise increasing certain of the points to be won or lost in the event of the last preceding bid becoming the contract.

xiii. REDOUBLE.—A call which has the effect of doubling the points which have been doubled or otherwise increased by a double.

xiv. PASS.—A call which conveys that the player does not on that occasion bid, double or redouble.

xv. CONTRACT.—The highest bid made in the auction, whether undoubled, doubled or redoubled.

xvi. DECLARER.—The player on the contracting side who first makes a bid of the denomination named in the contract. He plays both his own cards and those of his partner.

xvii. DUMMY.—The declarer's partner after he has placed his cards face upwards on the table.

xviii. TRICK.—Four cards, one from each hand, one being led and the other three played in one round of play.

xix. TO LEAD.—To select and place face upwards on the table the opening card of a trick.

xx. To Play.—To select and place face upwards on the table one of the other cards to be comprised in a trick, unless the context otherwise requires.

xxi. Quitted Trick.—A trick which has been gathered and turned by a player on the side which has won it and from which the hand of the player has been removed.

xxii. Odd Tricks.—Each trick won by a side in excess of six.

xxiii. Overtrick.—Each odd trick won by the declarer in excess of his contract.

xxiv. Undertrick.—Each trick by which the declarer falls short of his contract.

xxv. Trump Suit.—The suit, if any, to which a higher trick-taking power attaches during the play of a hand. Each of its cards is a trump and ranks above any card of any other suit.

xxvi. Exposed Card.—During the auction and the play this term is restricted to mean:—

(*a*) any card dropped face upwards on the table, even though no other player can name it;

(*b*) any card dropped elsewhere than on the table when the offender's partner sees its face, but not when it is seen only by an opponent;

(*c*) any card so held by a player that his partner sees any portion of its face, but not a card so held that only an opponent can see it;

(*d*) any card held by a player if he has said anything indicating that he holds it;

(*e*) any card dropped face upwards on the table along with one which the player says he intended to lead or to play;

(*f*) the two last cards in the hand of an opponent of the declarer, if, before that opponent has played to the twelfth trick, his partner has shown his last card; and

(*g*) any card which under any provisions in these laws may be treated as an exposed card [*laws* 43, 46 (2), 46 (5), 55 (1), *and* 56].

xxvii. To Follow Suit.—To play a card of the suit led.

xxviii. Revoke.—Failure to follow suit when able to do so, also failure to lead or play as duly required by or under these laws when able to obey such requirement.

xxix. Honour.—The ace, king, queen, knave, or ten of a trump suit or each of the four aces at no-trumps.

xxx. Slam.—Grand slam—the winning of thirteen tricks by one side; little slam—the winning of twelve tricks by one side.

xxxi. Trick Score.—The score which counts both towards the winning of a game and the winning of a rubber.

xxxii. Premium Score.—The score which counts towards the winning of a rubber but not towards the winning of any game.

xxxiii. Vulnerable.—(*This definition only concerns Contract Bridge.*)

xxxiv. Rubber.—The succession of hands ending when one side has won two games.

PART II

DISPOSITIONS PRELIMINARY TO THE RUBBER

FORMATION OF TABLES AND JOINING TABLES

1. (1) A table has either four, five or six members. A table with six members is complete.

(2) Any candidate may at any time join a table which is not complete by signifying his desire to do so.

(3) A member of a table may join another table, but no one can be a member of more than one table at the same time.

PRECEDENCE

2. In the formation of a table, candidates who have not yet played have precedence over those who have played in regard to membership and also in regard to title to play in the first rubber. As between candidates with equal rights, precedence is determined by drawing cards.

DRAWING CARDS

3. (1) When cards are to be drawn, one shuffled pack is spread face downwards on the table. Each person entitled to draw, draws a card from the pack. If anyone exposes more than one card or draws one of the four cards at either end of the pack, he must draw again.

(2) Precedence or choice goes to the drawer of the higher card. If cards of equal rank are drawn, they rank downwards in the order – spade, heart, diamond, club.

SELECTION OF PLAYERS AND PARTNERS FOR FIRST RUBBER

4. If all members at a newly formed table have equal rights, all draw cards. That drawing serves for all purposes in the following manner – the four who draw higher cards play in the first rubber; the two with higher cards occupy alternate seats at the table and play as partners against the other two; the one with the highest card deals first.

In any other case the four who are to play in the first rubber draw for partners and deal.

SELECTION OF PLAYERS AND PARTNERS FOR SUCCEEDING RUBBER

5. At the end of each rubber place must first be made at the table for any member who is waiting to play, and, so long as the table is not complete, for any candidate who, before a card has been drawn for selection of players or partners, announces his desire to join the table.

In the selection from among those who played the last rubber of the two or more who are to continue playing, precedence is given to any who have played a less number of consecutive rubbers, and, as amongst those with equal rights, is determined by drawing cards.

The four members entitled to play then draw for partners and deal.

CHOICE OF PACKS AND SEATS

6. The dealer of the first hand of a rubber has the right to choose his seat and the pack with which he will deal. He may consult his partner, but having announced his decision, must abide by it.

PART III

THE SHUFFLE, THE CUT AND THE DEAL

SHUFFLING

7. (1) After the players are seated at the table for a rubber the player on the dealer's left shuffles the pack which the dealer has chosen. Each player has the right to shuffle once. The dealer has the right to shuffle last.

(2) The pack must be shuffled thoroughly in view of all the players and so as not to show the face of any card. If the last shuffle has not complied fully with these requirements, any player before the deal starts may demand a new shuffle.

(3) During each deal the dealer's partner should collect the other cards, shuffle them and place them, as a pack, face downwards on his right, i.e., on the left of the player who will deal next; and this pack must then remain there until the next dealer takes it up for his deal.

CUTTING

8. (1) The dealer presents the pack to the player on his right who lifts off a portion from the top and places it towards the dealer beside the bottom portion. The dealer then completes the cut by placing the bottom portion on the top portion.

(2) If any player demands it, there must be a new shuffle and cut if—

(*a*) the cut is not made by the proper player; or

(*b*) the cut has left fewer than four cards in either portion; or

(*c*) the face of a card is shown in cutting or in completing the cut; or

(*d*) any player other than the dealer completes the cut; or

(*e*) there is doubt as to the exact place in which the pack was divided, or as to which was the top portion; or

(*f*) any player shuffles the cards after the cut; or

(*g*) the cut is made before the play of the preceding hand has been completed.

DEALING

9. (1) The players deal in turn according to the rotation of the game.

(2) The dealer must deal the fifty-two cards into four packets, face downwards, one at a time in rotation, the first card being dealt to the player on his left.

(3) Any player dealing out of turn, or with the opponent's pack, may be stopped before the last card is dealt; otherwise the deal stands good as if made in turn, and the packs, if changed, remain changed.

(4) A player must not look at any of his cards until the deal is completed.

AN IMPERFECT DEAL

10. (1) There must be a new deal by the same player with the same pack if—

(*a*) the dealer omits to have the pack cut and any player draws attention to the error before the last card is dealt and before he looks at any of his cards; or

(*b*) during a deal any card is found to be faced in the pack; or

(*c*) during a deal a card is in any way exposed on, above, or below the table; this is subject to law 38 in any case where a player has violated law 9 (4); or

(*d*) the cards are not dealt into four packets, one at a time in regular rotation, beginning with the player on the dealer's left; provided that, if the dealer deals two cards at once or consecutively to the same hand, he may rectify the error before dealing another card; or

(*e*) the last card does not come in its regular order to the dealer; or

(*f*) a player picks up another player's hand and looks at it; or

(*g*) before play begins, or at any time during the hand, a player holds more than the proper number of cards and another less; but, if it can be shown that two cards have been played to a trick from one hand and none from another hand, law 48 applies in place of this law (*see also law* 49).

(2) If during a hand it is found that the number of cards in the pack is incorrect, or that a duplication exists, there must be a new deal by the same player with a correct pack, but scores made as a result of previous deals are not affected.

PART IV

THE AUCTION

THE AUCTION AND ITS DURATION

11. (1) When the deal is completed, the dealer must open the auction by making a call; and, thereafter, each player in rotation must make a call.

(2) If in the first round of the auction all four players pass, the hand is abandoned, and the player whose turn it is to deal next, deals, using the other pack.

(3) Otherwise the auction continues until a bid, double or redouble, made by one player has been passed by the other three players, at which point the auction is closed.

BIDDING AND OVERBIDDING

12. Each successive bid must either be of higher value than the last preceding bid or of equal value and of greater number (*see law* 40—*insufficient bid*). The value of a bid is determined by giving to each odd trick named in it the trick value attaching to a bid of its denomination (*see law* 30).

DOUBLING AND REDOUBLING

13. (1) Any player in his turn may double the last preceding bid, if made by an opponent, or may redouble it if it has been doubled by an opponent. He is not required to name the bid he is doubling or redoubling. Doubling and redoubling affect the points to be scored for odd tricks won, for overtricks and for undertricks (*laws* 30, 31 *and* 32), but not those for honours, for slams or for rubber. They do not affect the number of tricks in the bid nor its value for the purpose of the auction.

(2) A bid which has been redoubled may not again be doubled or redoubled.

(3) When a bid has been doubled, or doubled and redoubled, any player may in his turn make a further bid until the auction is closed by three successive passes.

(4) If in doubling or redoubling a player mentions an incorrect number of tricks, he is deemed to have doubled or redoubled the bid as made.

PASSING

14. A player who does not desire to make any other call passes (to avoid misunderstandings, this is best expressed by the words "no bid").

THE FINAL BID AND THE DECLARER

15. The final bid in the auction becomes the contract, and, if a suit was named in it, that suit becomes the trump suit for the hand. The player who secures the contract and his partner become the contracting side, and that one of them who first made a bid of the denomination named in the contract becomes the declarer.

CORRECTING A MISNOMER

16. If a call is a misnomer and is shown to be such by the player amending it practically in the same breath, it stands as corrected. By a misnomer

is meant a slip of the tongue and not a change of mind. Except in a case provided for by this law or by law 40 (*insufficient bid*), a player may not alter a call made by him.

INFORMATION AS TO CALLS MADE

17. (1) A player may ask to have previous calls restated—

(*a*) during the auction when it is his turn to call, and

(*b*) after the auction is closed but before the opening lead is made.

(2) After the opening lead is made a player may only ask what the contract is and whether, but not by whom, it was doubled or redoubled.

PART V

THE PLAY

THE OPENING LEAD AND THE DUMMY

18. When the auction is closed, the player on the left of the declarer leads a card. The declarer's partner then spreads his cards face upwards in front of him on the table, and the declarer plays both his own hand and that of his partner, who is thereafter known as the "dummy."

DUMMY'S RIGHTS

19. The dummy may not by act or word suggest any lead or play (*see law* 50), or call attention to an opponent's revoke, lead out of turn, or card exposure, or warn the declarer that he is about to lead from the wrong hand or tell him, except in reply to a question, which hand has the lead (*see law* 51): otherwise he has all the rights of a player, subject to the provisions of law 55 (4) (*inquiring as to whether a lead or play constitutes a revoke*).

SUBSEQUENT PLAY AND LEADS

20. (1) After a lead, a card is played from each hand in rotation, and the four cards thus played constitute a trick.

(2) The leader may lead any card. The other three hands must follow suit if they can, but, if unable to follow suit, may play any card.

(3) A trick containing a trump or trumps is won by the hand playing the highest trump. A trick containing no trump is won by the hand playing the highest card of the suit led.

(4) The hand winning a trick leads to the next trick.

LEAD OR PLAY—WHEN COMPLETED

21. (1) A card led or played, or named by a player as the card which he proposes to lead or play, cannot be taken back except as directed or permitted in these laws (*laws* 45 *and* 46, *leads out of turn; law* 49, *missing card found in a quitted trick; and law* 55, *correcting a revoke*).

(2) A card is deemed to have been led or played—

(*a*) by the declarer, when a card from his own hand has been quitted face upwards on the table or when he touches a card in the dummy's hand; but, if in touching a card in the dummy's hand he says "I arrange" or words to that effect or if he is manifestly touching it for some other purpose, such touching does not constitute a lead or play;

(*b*) by an opponent of the declarer, when a card has been detached from his hand and so placed or held that his partner sees any portion of its face.

22. Each completed trick must be gathered and turned face downwards on the table by a player of the side winning it, and is deemed to be quitted when the player's hand is removed from it. The cards of each quitted trick should be kept together so that its identity can be readily established, and the tricks taken by a side should be arranged together in such manner that their number and sequence may be observed.

TRICK APPROPRIATED BY THE WRONG SIDE

23. A trick appropriated by the side which did not win it may be claimed or conceded at any time before the tricks have been put together for shuffling [*see law* 46 (1, 2 *and* 3)—*subsequent lead*].

INSPECTING QUITTED TRICKS

24. After a trick has been turned and quitted, the cards in it may be counted face downwards, but it may not be again turned and inspected before the end of the hand (*see law* 53) unless—

(*a*) there is difference of opinion as to which hand won it;

(*b*) it is found to contain an incorrect number of cards;

(*c*) it is necessary to turn it in order to substitute a correct card (*law* 55); or

(*d*) a player who fears that he has revoked in it obtains permission to examine it before he or his partner has led or played to the next trick. An opponent may refuse such permission, but in that case his side cannot claim the penalty for an established revoke in that trick.

INFORMATION AS TO CARDS PLAYED

25. During the play of a trick and until it has been quitted, any player may require the players to specify which cards they have played.

HANDS NOT PLAYED OUT

26. (1) An opponent of the declarer may show any of his remaining cards to the declarer for the purpose of claiming one or more of the remaining tricks, and such cards are not liable to be called unless the other opponent sees them.

(2) If the declarer claims or indicates by exposing his remaining cards or otherwise that some or all of the remaining tricks are his, he must leave his cards face upwards on the table, and make a complete statement as to how he intends to play the rest of the hand, including his intention in regard to the order in which he proposes to lead or play his cards, in regard to any finesse or the trumping of any doubtful winner, and in regard to any other material matter (*see law* 54).

He cannot call any cards which may have been exposed in consequence of his action, nor can his cards be called by an opponent.

No exposure of cards made in connection with such claim can be treated as an act establishing a revoke.

The declarer cannot be subjected to any revoke penalty for a play made after he has exposed his cards.

(3) If a claim, or a concession, of tricks has been accepted and all the players have in consequence exposed their cards, no player can claim that the play of the hand shall be continued. If a side has conceded a trick or tricks which it could not lose by any play of the cards, the other side cannot claim such trick or tricks.

(4) When a hand is not played out, the unplayed cards may be examined for the purpose of establishing a revoke.

PART VI

THE SCORE

POINTS TO BE SCORED

27. (1) Points are scored in respect of odd tricks, bonus, undertricks, honours, slams and rubber.

(2) Points scored in respect of odd tricks bid and won are scored in a trick score; all other points are scored separately in a premium score (*law 55 provides that for all scoring purposes tricks transferred to pay the established revoke penalty rank as tricks won*).

POINTS WHICH WIN GAME

28. (1) A game is won by the side which, in one or more hands, first scores thirty points for odd tricks won.

(2) The hand in which a side wins a game is played out and all points won therein are scored; but no trick score obtained by either side in that hand or in any preceding hand can assist towards winning the next game.

VULNERABILITY

29. (*This law only concerns Contract Bridge.*)

TRICK POINTS

30. If the declarer fulfils his contract, his side score for odd tricks won—
when clubs are trumps, 6 points per trick;
when diamonds are trumps, 7 points per trick;
when hearts are trumps, 8 points per trick;
when spades are trumps, 9 points per trick;
when there are no-trumps, 10 points per trick.

These points are doubled in the case of a doubled contract and are quadrupled in the case of a redoubled contract.

BONUS POINTS

31. If the declarer fulfils his contract in a case where it has been doubled, his side scores a bonus of 50 points for so doing and 50 points for each overtrick won.

These points are doubled in the case of a redoubled contract.

UNDERTRICK POINTS

32. If the declarer fails to fulfil his contract, his side scores nothing for the tricks won by him, and the opponents score in respect of each undertrick 50 points.

These points are doubled in the case of a doubled contract and are quadrupled in the case of a redoubled contract.

HONOUR POINTS

33. Either side scores for honours (*def. xxix*) as follows:—

(*a*) if there is a trump suit—
for 5 honours in one hand, 10 times the trick value of the suit;
for 4 honours in one hand and one in the other, 9 times the trick value of the suit;
for 4 honours in one hand and none in the other, 8 times the trick value of the suit;

for 5 honours, neither hand containing more than 3, 5 times the trick value of the suit;
for 4 honours, not all in one hand, 4 times the trick value of the suit;
for 3 honours, twice the trick value of the suit;

(*b*) if there are no trumps—
for 4 aces in one hand, 100 points;
for 4 aces not in one hand, 40 points;
for 3 aces, 30 points.

SLAM POINTS

34. Either side scores for a little slam (*def. xxx*) 50 points, and for a grand slam 100 points.

The contracting side, having contracted to make seven odd tricks and failed, cannot score a little slam.

RUBBER POINTS

35. (1) The rubber ends when one side has won two games, and the winners of the final game add to their score 250 points.

(2) Where a rubber ends by arrangement before either side has won two games, a side which has won one game adds 125 points to its score.

THE RESULT OF THE RUBBER

36. At the end of the rubber the trick and premium score of each side is added up: the side with the larger total score wins the rubber, and the difference between the two totals represents the number of points won.

CORRECTION OF SCORE

37. Proven errors are subject to correction as follows—

(*a*) in the trick score at any time before the next deal is completed, or, if the error occurs in the final hand of a rubber, at any time before the rubber score has been made up and agreed;

(*b*) in the premium score, at any time before the rubber score has been made up and agreed;

(*c*) in addition or subtraction, whenever discovered.

PART VII

INFRINGEMENT OF LAWS AND PENALTIES

LOOKING AT CARDS DURING DEAL

38. If a player looks at any of his cards during a deal (*law* 9 (4)) and in consequence thereof a card is faced before the deal is completed, the player on his left, after looking at the cards already dealt to him, may elect that notwithstanding the exposure of such card (*law* 10 (1) (*c*)) there shall not be a new deal.

CALL OUT OF TURN

39. (1) If a player makes a call, other than a pass before any bid has been made, when it is the turn of his partner or of the opponent on his left to call or, except to correct a misnomer (*law* 16) or an insufficient bid (*law* 40), makes a second and different call before the opponent on his left

has called, that opponent may claim a new deal; and, if such player elects to allow the deal to stand, the out-of-turn call is cancelled and the auction proceeds as though it had not been made.

(2) If a player makes a call, other than a pass, when it is the turn of the opponent on his right to call, the auction reverts to that opponent and proceeds as though the out-of-turn calls had not been made, but the offender's partner must pass when next it is his turn to call.

(3) If, in either case, the player on the offender's left has called before attention has been drawn to the irregularity, the out-of-turn call must be treated as a call made in proper sequence.

INSUFFICIENT BID

40. (1) If a player bids a number of tricks insufficient to overbid the preceding bid (*law* 12) and fails to correct his bid before attention is drawn to the irregularity (*see law* 60), the player on his left may either :—

(*a*) allow the bid to stand ; in this case the insufficient bid ranks as a sufficient bid, and the auction proceeds ; or

(*b*) require the offender to increase the number of tricks specified in the bid to a number of the same denomination sufficient to overbid the preceding bid, or to seven, whichever is the lower ; in this case the auction proceeds, but the offender's partner must pass when next it is his turn to call if the opponent on his right has passed the offender's bid ; or

(*c*) declare the auction closed. In this case, the contract shall be the last bid preceding the insufficient bid ; and, if such last bid was doubled or redoubled before the insufficient bid was made, such double or redouble remains effective.

(2) Until attention has been drawn to the irregularity or a call has been made by the player on his left, the offender may correct his bid by raising the number of tricks specified to the requisite number of the same denomination. If he does so, the bid stands as corrected, and there is no penalty.

(3) If the player on the offender's left makes a call before attention has been drawn to the irregularity, the insufficient bid ranks as a sufficient bid.

CALL AFTER THE AUCTION IS CLOSED

41. If an opponent of the declarer makes a call other than a pass after the auction has closed, the declarer may call a lead from the partner of the offender the first time it is the turn of that player to lead.*

OTHER ILLEGAL CALLS

42. If a player—

(*a*) bids eight or more odd tricks;

(*b*) bids doubles or redoubles when debarred by these laws from so doing;

(*c*) doubles his partner's bid;

(*d*) doubles or redoubles a bid which his partner has doubled or redoubled;

(*e*) names a wrong suit when doubling or redoubling; or

(*f*) makes any other call not recognised in these laws and not dealt with in laws 39, 40 or 41;

the player on the offender's left may—

(i) demand a new deal; or

* A player revokes if, when able to lead or play as required, he fails to do so (*def. xxviii*).

(ii) disallow the call, in which case the offender is deemed to have passed; or

(iii) state that he allows the call to stand in the case of (*a*) or (*b*). In the case of (*a*) a bid of eight or more tricks is then treated as a bid of seven odd tricks only.

CARD EXPOSED DURING THE AUCTION

43. If, after the deal has been completed but before the auction is closed, any player exposes—

(*a*) a single card of less than honour rank without intent to lead, the player who becomes the declarer, if he be an opponent of the offender, may either—

(i) treat the card as an exposed card during the play; or

(ii) prohibit the offender's partner from making his first lead in the suit of that card*;

(*b*) a single card of honour rank, or a lower card with intent to lead, or more than one card, the player on his left may claim a new deal.

CARD EXPOSED DURING THE PLAY

44. (1) If after the auction is closed an opponent of the declarer exposes (*see def. xxvi*) a card from his hand other than a card which he is leading or playing, such card, except as otherwise provided in these laws,† must be left on the table as an exposed card, and the declarer, whenever it is the turn of the owner of the card to lead or to play, may call that card, i.e., require him to lead or play that card, even though it may not have been left on the table.

(2) The declarer cannot forbid the lead or play of an exposed card.

(3) A call to play an exposed card does not override the player's duty to follow suit, but the card remains an exposed card until played and may be called to any later trick.

(4) No penalty is incurred by the declarer or his partner for exposing cards after the auction has closed.

DECLARER LEADING FROM WRONG HAND

45. If the declarer leads from the wrong hand, either opponent may require him to lead from the correct hand, and in such a case he must, if he can, lead a card of the same suit*; but, if an opponent plays to the trick before the declarer withdraws the card wrongly led, the lead from the wrong hand must be treated as a correct lead.

LEAD OUT OF TURN

46. (1) If the declarer leads from either hand when it is an opponent's turn to lead, either opponent may require him to take the lead back, but he may not withdraw it unless an opponent requires him to do so.

(2) If an opponent of the declarer leads when it is not his turn to lead, the declarer, before he has played to the trick from either hand, may—

(i) call a lead of a suit named by him from the offending side when first it is an opponent's turn to lead,* and, if it is not an opponent's turn to lead, treat the card led out of turn as an exposed card until it becomes an opponent's turn to lead; or

(ii) treat the card led out of turn as an exposed card and, if the card is still an exposed card when next it is the turn of the offender's partner to lead, forbid that lead to be made in the suit of the exposed card*; or

(iii) treat the card led out of turn as a card led in turn.

*A player revokes if, when able to lead or play as required, he fails to do so (*def. xxviii*).

†See law 26 (1) and (2)—hands not played out: law 43 (1)—card exposed during auction; law 44 (4)—cards of the contracting side; law 49 (1)—missing card; laws 51, 58 and 59—cases where penalty may lapse; and law 55 (1b)—cards played or led after a revoke and before its correction.

(3) If a card is played to an out-of-turn lead by the other side, the incorrect lead must be treated as a correct lead, and, in a case where a card is so played from the declarer's hand to an opening lead by the wrong opponent, the declarer becomes the dummy and his partner becomes the declarer.

(4) If, after an opening lead by the wrong opponent, the declarer's partner exposes any of his cards before the declarer has selected the penalty, the latter may not exact the penalty specified in (2) (i) above.

(5) If the opponents of the declarer lead simultaneously, the correct lead stands and the card led out of turn is an exposed card.

PREMATURE LEAD OR PLAY

47. (1) If an opponent of the declarer—

(*a*) plays to a trick before his partner when in proper turn, his partner should play before him; or

(*b*) leads before his partner has played to the current trick; or

(*c*) shows any card in his hand to his partner before the latter has played to the current trick;

the declarer may require the offender's partner*—

(i) to play the highest or the lowest card he holds in the suit led; or

(ii) to win the trick, by trumping if necessary; or

(iii) not to win the trick; or

(iv) to discard a card of a named suit;

but no such requirement can override the player's duty to follow suit.

(2) If the declarer, after leading from one hand, plays from the other hand out of turn, the fourth hand has the right to play before the second, and no penalty can be exacted by the declarer.

PLAYING WITH A SURPLUS CARD

48. If during the play of a hand it is found that a player has a surplus card due to omission to play to a trick—

(*a*) where the offender has led or played to a later trick, the declarer or the opponent on the declarer's left, as the case may be, may claim a new deal; but this penalty may not be enforced against the dummy's hand;

(*b*) where the play continues, the offender must forthwith remove a card from the redundant hand, and, if practicable, the card must be one which he could properly have played to the defective trick.

PLAYING WITH AN INCOMPLETE HAND

49. If after the completion of a deal it is found that one player has less, and no player more, than the proper number of cards, the missing card or cards must, if possible, be found, and—

(*a*) in the event of failure to find a missing card, or of its position when found being such as to show that it was not duly dealt to the player, there shall be a new deal;

(*b*) in any other event, including the case where a missing card is found in a quitted trick or in the other pack, the card shall be restored to the player. It cannot be treated as an exposed card, but in determining whether the player has revoked it is deemed to have been in his hand while it was missing. If a quitted trick contains more than four cards and there is doubt as to which card was included therein in error, the opponents may direct which card is to be restored to the deficient hand.

* A player revokes if, when able to lead or play as required, he fails to do so (*def. xxviii*).

DUMMY SUGGESTING CARD TO BE PLAYED

50. If the dummy, by touching a card or otherwise, suggests the play of a card (*law* 19), the opponent on the dummy's left may require the declarer to play or not to play that card, unless such play would constitute a revoke.

DUMMY DRAWING ATTENTION TO IRREGULARITIES

51. (1) If the dummy in any way volunteers to tell the declarer which hand has the lead or warns him not to lead from the wrong hand (*law* 19), the opponent on the dummy's left may choose the hand from which the lead is to be made.

(2) If the dummy draws attention to any other irregularity to which he has no right to draw attention (*law* 19), the declarer can exact no penalty for that irregularity.

DIRECTING PARTNER'S ATTENTION TO POSITION OF TRICK

52. If the dummy or an opponent of the declarer before his partner has played to a trick and without being requested to do so, directs his partner's attention to the trick in any way, as by saying it is his, by naming his card or drawing the cards towards him, the declarer or the opponent on the dummy's left, as the case may be, may require the offender's partner*—

(i) to play the highest or the lowest card which he holds in the suit led; or

(ii) to win the trick, by trumping if necessary; or

(iii) not to win the trick;

but no such requirement can override the player's duty to follow suit.

LOOKING AT A QUITTED TRICK

53. If a player turns and inspects a quitted trick when not authorised by these laws to do so (*law* 24), the declarer or the opponent on his left, as the case may be, may select the suit from which the offending side is to lead when first it is the turn of that side to lead.*

DECLARER CLAIMING UNCERTAIN TRICKS

54. If the declarer has claimed or indicated that some or all of the remaining tricks are his [*law* 26 (2)], either opponent may require him to play the hand in the way in which he has stated that it is his intention to play it, and, if he has not voluntarily made a complete statement in regard to his intended play, may require him to amplify it and thereafter any matter which his statement has left unsettled shall be settled as this opponent directs.

THE REVOKE

Penalty if revoke corrected

55. (1) If a player revokes (*def. xxviii*) and corrects his error by withdrawing the card wrongly led or played before the revoke becomes established, he must substitute a correct card, and—

(*a*) if the wrong card belongs to—

(i) an opponent of the declarer, the latter may either treat it as an exposed card or require the offender to lead or play the highest or lowest card he holds in the correct suit*;

(ii) the declarer's own hand, it may be taken up; and the opponent on his left, if he has played to the trick after the declarer, may require him to lead or play the highest or lowest card he holds in the correct suit*;

* A player revokes if, when able to lead or play as required, he fails to do so (*def. xxviii*).

(iii) the dummy's hand, there is no penalty, whether the revoke is corrected or becomes established;

(*b*) a card led or played by the non-offending side in the interval between a revoke and its correction may be taken back without penalty; but a correct card played from the hand of the offender's partner may not be taken back.

Acts which establish revokes

(2) A revoke in any of the first eleven tricks, which has not been corrected by withdrawing the card wrongly led or played, becomes established when in right turn or otherwise—

(*a*) the offender or his partner leads or plays to the next trick, if the revoke was made in playing;

(*b*) the offender's partner plays to the trick, if the revoke was made in leading.

A revoke made in the twelfth trick never becomes established.

Enquiries regarding possible revokes

(3) Any player, subject in the case of the dummy to the provisions in (4) of this law, may question any other player as to whether his lead or play constitutes a revoke, but a question or the answer which should be made thereto, or the fact that a player has started a question or an answer, spoken any word or made any exclamation or gesture cannot be held to alter or postpone the provisions of subsection (2) of this law.

(4) The dummy may question only his partner, and, if he does so after intentionally seeing any card in any other hand, his partner may not withdraw his card. If the dummy leaves the table without having intentionally seen any card in another hand, the opponents may not claim the penalty for an established revoke unless one of them has questioned the declarer before such revoke became established.

(5) An opponent of the offender, before a revoke is established, may demand that a correct card shall be substituted for the revoking card.

Penalty if revoke established

(6) When a revoke has been established the trick stands as played, and, if attention has been drawn to the revoke, two tricks won by the revoking side are transferred to the other side at the end of the hand.

For each subsequent revoke by the same side in the same hand which becomes similarly liable to penalty one trick is so transferred.

Provided always that no transfer shall include any trick won before the first revoke occurred, or any trick transferred from the other side under this law.*

(7) Tricks so transferred rank for all scoring purposes as tricks won in play by the side receiving them.

Claiming an established revoke

(8) If an established revoke has been claimed, with or without reference to a particular suit, the tricks may be inspected at the end of the hand to

* In certain cases, when a trick, in which an established revoke occurred, has been won by the non-offending side, inexperienced players may have difficulty in determining the sequence of tricks. In such a case the decision of a majority of the players, as to the number of tricks transferable, shall govern; failing such decision, the number shall be determined by the non-offending side.

settle the claim, and, if an opponent of the claimant mixes the cards after such claim and before they have been fully inspected, the claim must be allowed.

(9) A revoke cannot be claimed after the cut for the next deal has been completed or the score of the rubber has been agreed.

PLAYING BEFORE OPPONENT HAS NAMED PENALTY

56. If a player leads or plays before an opponent who is entitled to require him to lead or play in a particular way has named the penalty, the opponent's right is not affected thereby, and the card led or played can be treated as an exposed card.

CLAIMING LEAD OF SUIT NOT HELD

57. If the player entitled to exact a penalty requiries a lead, play or discard of a suit of which the opponent to whom his requirement is addressed has none, the penalty lapses.

CLAIMING UNAUTHORISED OR DOUBLE PENALTY

58. (1) If a player claims a penalty to which he is not entitled, his side forfeits the right to exact any penalty for the irregularity.

(2) If a player has exacted the penalty or penalties available under one law, he cannot exact a penalty for the same offence under any other law.

WRONG PLAYER CLAIMING PENALTY

59. If the dummy or the partner of the player solely entitled to claim a penalty for an irregularity claims a penalty or suggests which of alternative penalties is to be claimed, or, without being requested to do so, tells his partner what penalties are available, the right to exact any penalty for that irregularity lapses.

CALLING ATTENTION TO AN IRREGULARITY

60. Any player, subject as regards the dummy to the provisions of law 19, may call his partner's attention to the fact that an irregularity has been committed; but this in no way affects the condoning of the irregularity by his partner's call or play (*see law* 39—*call out of turn; law* 40—*insufficient bid; and laws* 45 *and* 46—*leads out of turn*). If requested to do so he may also state the law on the subject.

MISSTATEMENT OF LAW

61. If a player, when requested by his partner or an opponent to state the law applying to a case in point, misstates the law, and the information so given remains uncorrected although there has been ample time for correcting it, no penalty can be imposed for any irregularity attributable to such misstatement.

PART VIII

SPECIAL LAWS

These laws shall be in force when no variation or resolution to the contrary has been promulgated or agreed by the players concerned.

PRELIMINARY DISPOSITIONS — ADDITIONAL RULES

62. (1) In the formation of tables, precedence, as amongst those who have not yet played, shall be governed by the order in which they have entered the room; as between those who have entered together it shall be determined by drawing cards.

(2) If a member of a table consents to make up another table which cannot be formed without him and announces his intention of returning to his former table when his place at the other table can be filled, his place at the first table shall be reserved for him. And, if he does not so retain his membership in the first table, he shall be the last to vacate his seat at the other table.

(3) If a player retires from a table, thereby leaving it with less than four members, he shall not be entitled to compete against any of the other players for entry into any other table.

(4) If only one table can be formed and there are seven in the room desiring to play, the membership of that table shall be increased to seven so long as these conditions obtain, and three players instead of two shall vacate their seats at the end of each rubber.

(5) At the end of each rubber "table up" shall be announced for the benefit of any member who may be waiting to play or, if the table is not complete, any candidate for membership.

PLAYER OBLIGED TO LEAVE

63. Any player who is obliged to leave a table before the rubber is concluded may, with the consent of the other players, appoint a substitute. And if such consent be not given or if it be impossible to find a substitute, the rubber shall be deemed to have ended by arrangement [*see law* 35 (2)].

QUESTIONS REGARDING RESULT OF A RUBBER

64. Any question depending upon the result of a rubber shall be decided by reference to the points won and not by reference to the games won, but it shall be treated as unsettled if the rubber is ended by arrangement [*law* 35 (2)].

CALLING FOR FRESH CARDS

65. Any player, after a hand has been played and before the pack has been cut for the next deal, may call for fresh cards at his own expense. He shall call for two new packs of which his opponent shall have the choice. But this law shall not apply in the case where damaged cards have to be replaced.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE LAWS

PROPRIETIES OF THE GAME

1. The nature of Auction Bridge and the conditions under which it is played are such that acts may be so done or words so spoken as to disturb the proper course of the game. In many cases players fail to appreciate when or how they are improperly conveying information to their partners. It is, therefore, desirable to warn all those who play the game that a player offends against the most important of its proprieties if he fails to avoid—

i. Undue delay in making a call when there is no need to consider any other call.

ii. Calling with special emphasis, inflection or intonation.

iii. Varying the formulæ used in calling.

iv. Exceptional haste or reluctance in passing or in doubling.

v. An unnecessary request for a review of the calls already made in the auction.

vi. In any way attracting attention to the score, except when necessary to do so for his own information.

vii. Carelessly passing or playing out of turn.

viii. Giving by word, manner or gesture any indication of the nature of the hand held.

ix. Any remark, question or gesture from which an inference may be drawn.

x. Calling attention to the number of tricks needed to complete or to defeat the contract or to the fact that it has already been fulfilled.

xi. Giving during the hand unauthorised information as to any incident of the auction.

xii. Indicating in any way approval or disapproval of his partner's call or play.

xiii. Allowing his partner's hesitation, remark or manner to influence his call or play.

xiv. Any unnecessary request to place the cards played to a trick.

xv. Playing a card with special emphasis.

xvi. Undue delay in playing to a trick when the play does not need consideration.

xvii. Preparing to gather a trick before all four hands have played to it.

xviii. Detaching a card from his hand before it is his turn to lead or play, e.g., a lead held ready before the partner has played to the current trick may indicate a desire to be left with the lead; and a lead held ready after leading a card may inform the partner that the card led, though not the highest, is a winner, and may be still more informative when the second lead is from a different suit.

xix. Volunteering information which should only be given in reply to a question.

2. For other reasons it is necessary to avoid with special care:—

i. Tilting cards upwards in the act of dealing or otherwise allowing any of them to be seen. This may cast upon another player a duty which it is not desirable to impose upon him.

ii. Using any convention in calling which has not been announced. The term "convention" is here used to cover any calling designed to convey an arbitrary or artificial meaning or used by a player with the assurance that his partner will not accept it in its natural sense. Obviously it is necessary that a convention so used should be fully understood by the other side, and players using any conventional call should be ready to reply fully to a proper inquiry by an opponent as to its meaning or use.

iii. Handling or moving the other pack at the end of a hand when not the next dealer.

iv. Failing to keep the tricks in correct order and distinct from one another or allowing some to be placed on the opposite side of the table.

v. When the declarer's partner, inspecting the declarer's hand after the auction is closed; or leaving the table to watch the declarer play the hand.

3. It is not wrong, except as specially provided in the case of the dummy, to warn a partner against infringing any rule of the game, e.g., against calling, leading or playing out of turn. Nor is it wrong to keep silent in regard to a revoke by one's own side except where it is a revoke in the twelfth trick.

4. Bystanders or members not playing should not when watching the play at a table call attention to any irregularity or mistake in the auction or play or to any point of fact or law, except when requested to give an opinion.

5. It is outside the scope of this supplement to refer to dishonourable acts, such as using an undisclosed or secret convention; but, to remove any possible doubt, it is stated here that no player should deliberately infringe any law even when prepared to pay the penalty, and that this includes making a second revoke to conceal one that has been made accidentally.

AUCTION SCORING TABLE

For		Undoubled	Doubled
Each odd trick won—	Trick Score		
if clubs are trumps		6	12
if diamonds are trumps		7	14
if hearts are trumps		8	16
if spades are trumps		9	18
if there are no trumps		10	20
Making the contract	Premium Score	—	50
Each overtrick		—	50
Each undertrick		50	100
Little slam (claimable by either side)		50	
Grand slam (claimable by either side)		100	
Honours (claimable by either side):			
in a suit contract—			
three honours		twice the trick value of the suit	
four honours		four times „ „ „	
five honours		five times „ „ „	
four honours, all in one hand		eight times „ „ „	
five honours, four in one hand		nine times „ „ „	
five honours, all in one hand		ten times „ „ „	
in a no-trump contract—			
three aces		30	
four aces		40	
four aces in one hand		100	
Rubber		250	
one game in unfinished rubber		125	

A redouble doubles the doubled points

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Numbers refer to Laws. D stands for Definition and P stands for Proprieties.

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